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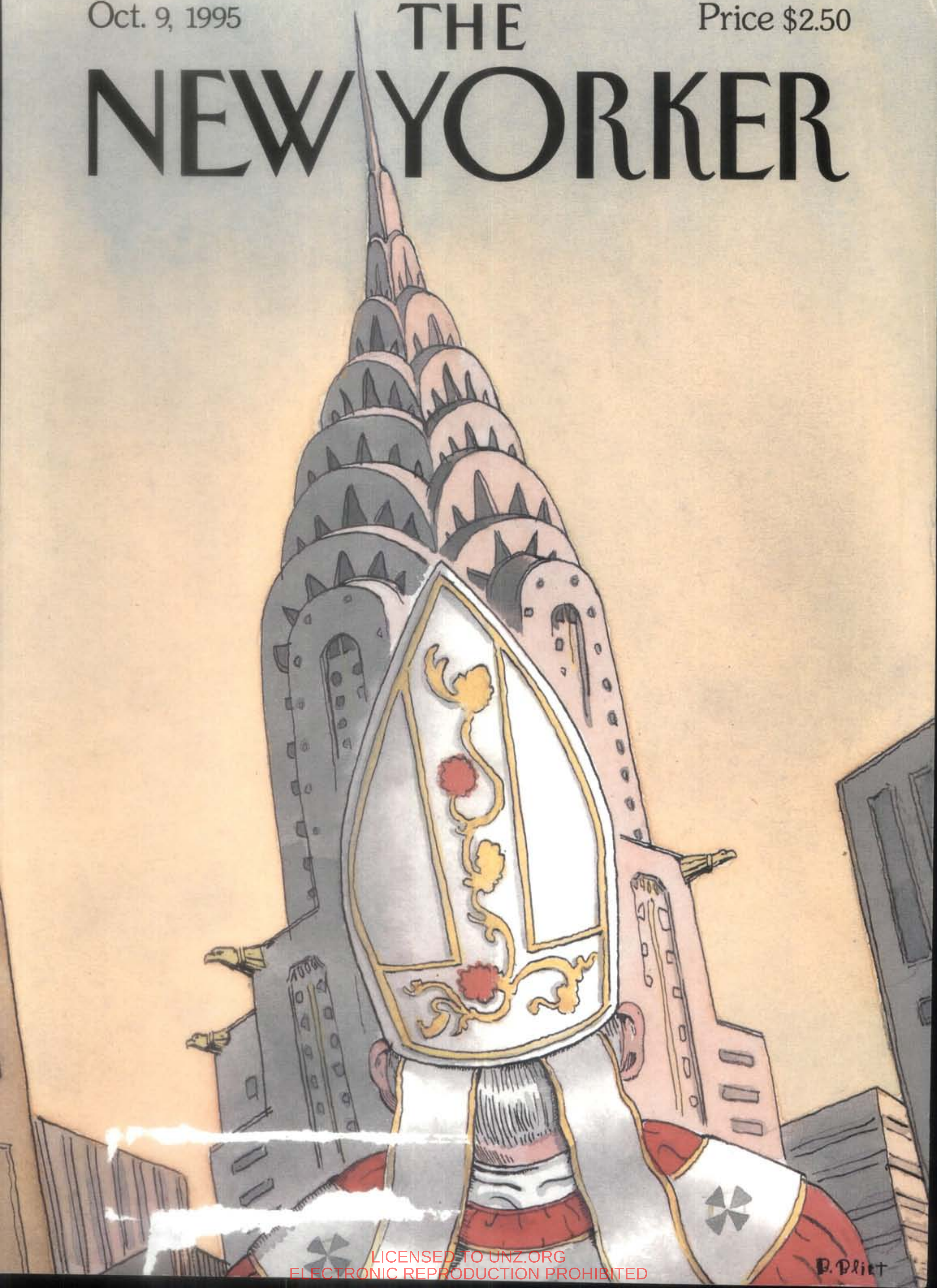

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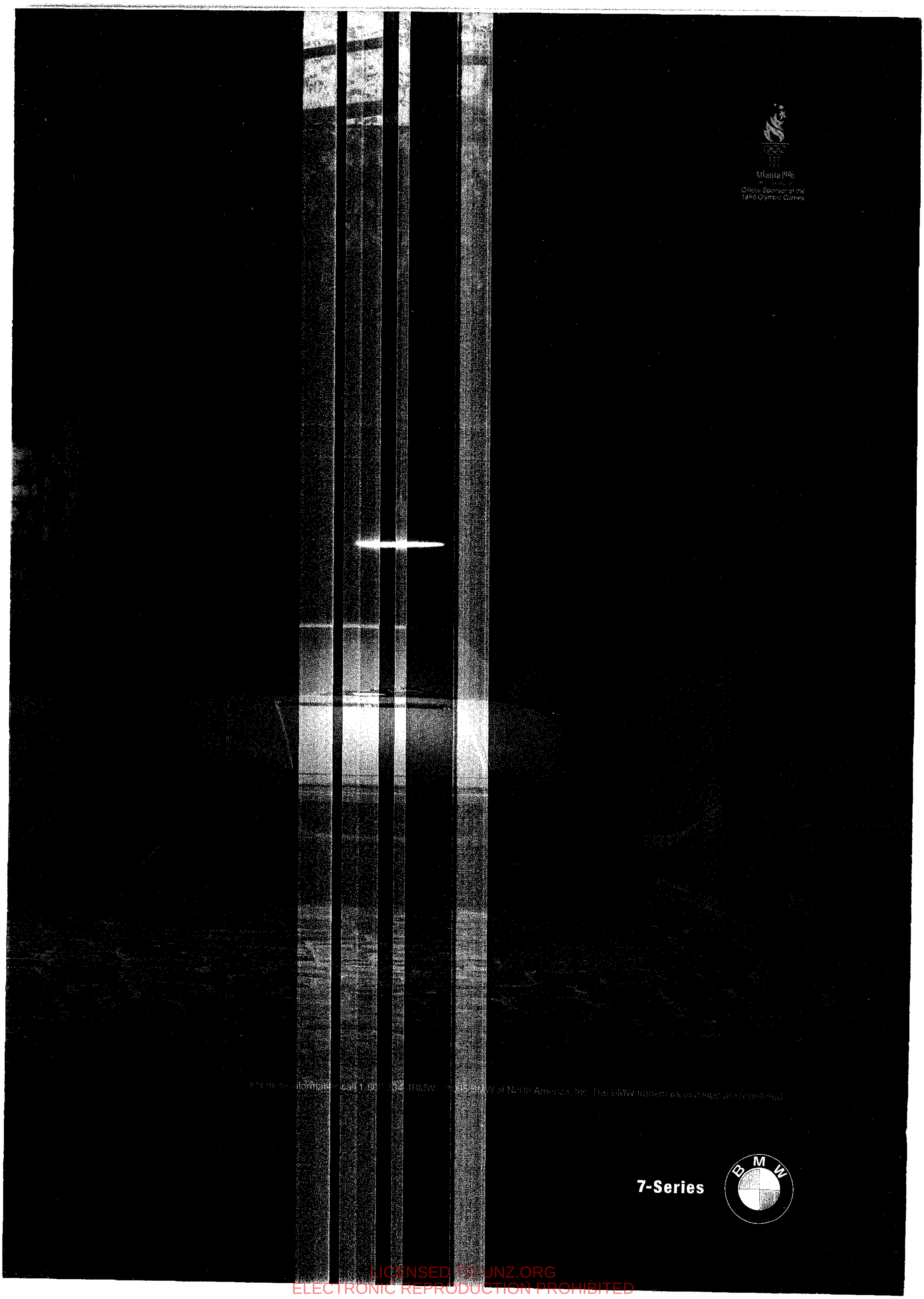
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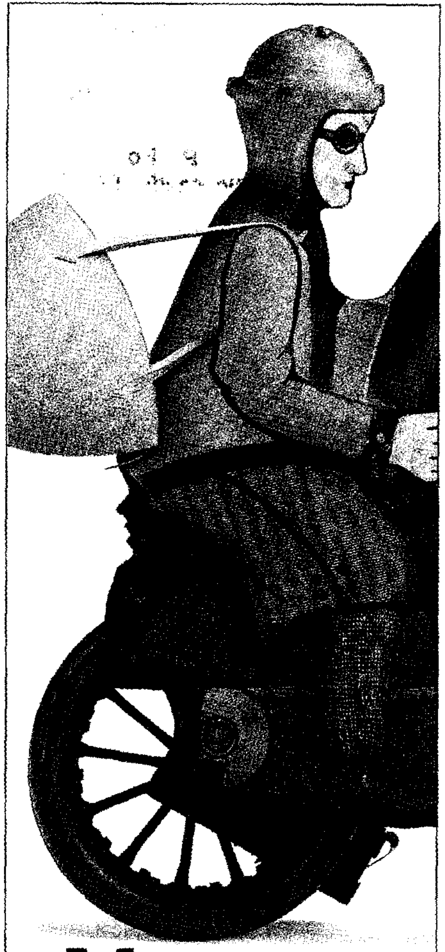

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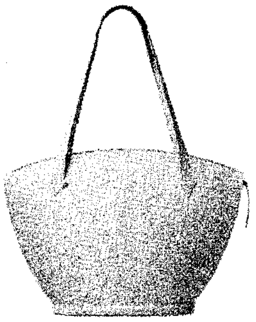

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THE NEW YORKER

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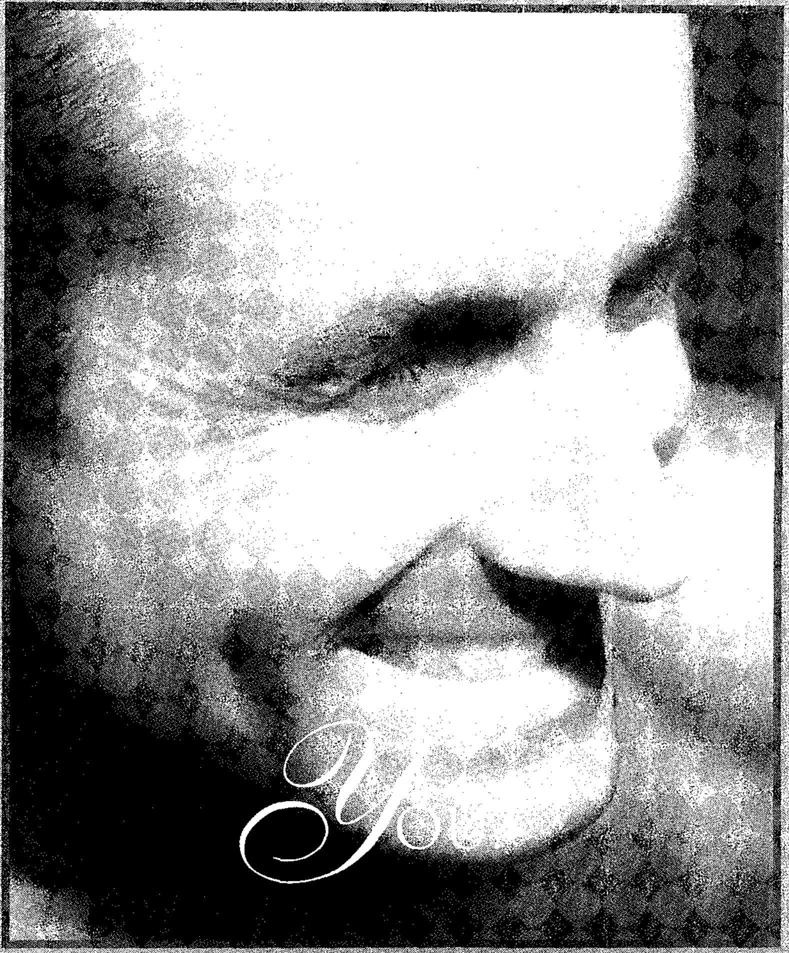

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COMMENT

THE VICTOR IN BOSNIA

Not Serbs, Muslims, or Croats, but tribalism itself.

THE wars that have desolated the former Yugoslavia over the past four years have been, to most Americans, baffling. Still, a few basics have been clear throughout. The destruction of Vukovar, the shelling of Dubrovnik, the pitiless siege of Sarajevo—these, we knew, were the work of the Serbs, along with the rape camps and the torture camps and the massacres too many to number, all in the Nazi-like name of ethnic cleansing. While we may have had little grasp of the sources of this fury, or of its political rationalizations or aims, we could at least identify an aggressor and, in the case of Bosnia, the war's principal victims, the Bosnian Muslims. For the war to be stopped, the Serbs had to be stopped, and the Muslims defended. But the only outside powers with the capacity to intervene decisively—the Western allies, led by the United States—chose to let the slaughter continue, month after month, year after year. The excuses for inaction offered by the leaders of the great powers, including two American Presidents, were often stunningly lame. And the damage those leaders have done to the United Nations through their cynical misuse of it in the name of peacekeeping may be permanent.

All the excuses have now been conclusively given the lie. On August 30th, NATO finally went into action, raining bombs on Bosnian Serb targets until, after barely a fortnight, the siege of Sarajevo was effectively lifted and the rebel Serb leadership suddenly got serious about peace negotiations. The suspicion that, after two and a half years of narcissistic dithering, President Clinton has taken the Balkan bull by the horns only because his campaign for reëlection requires it is simply too depressing to accept. Let us say instead that Mr. Clinton felt he had to give other, nonmilitary ideas for intervention a chance, that he waited to act forcefully until the strategic moment arrived. In any event, he has now done what was plainly right, and what he himself saw and proclaimed to be right more than three years ago, as a candidate: he has jumped in on the side of the victims and has hit the bullies hard.

So are these brutal, atavistic wars in Europe really almost over? Not necessar-

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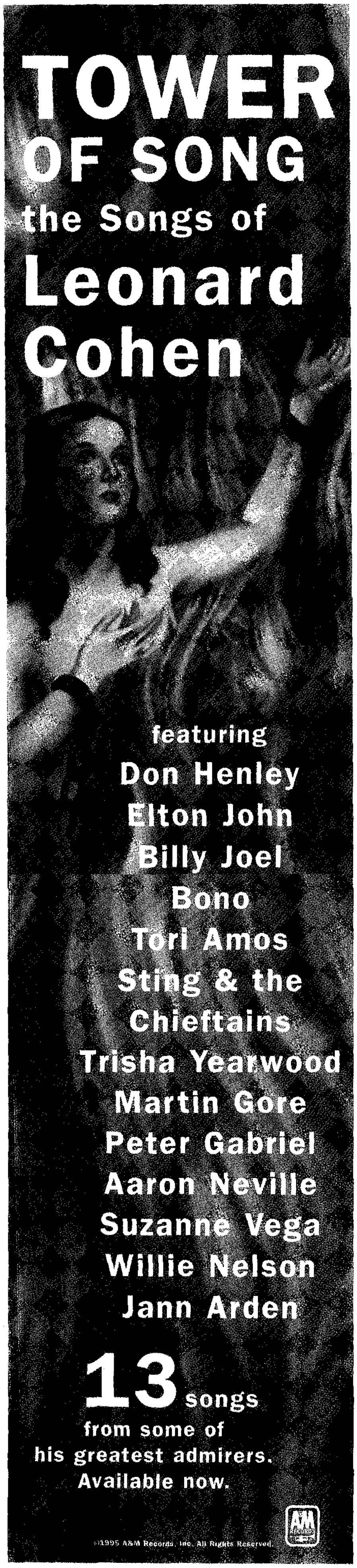
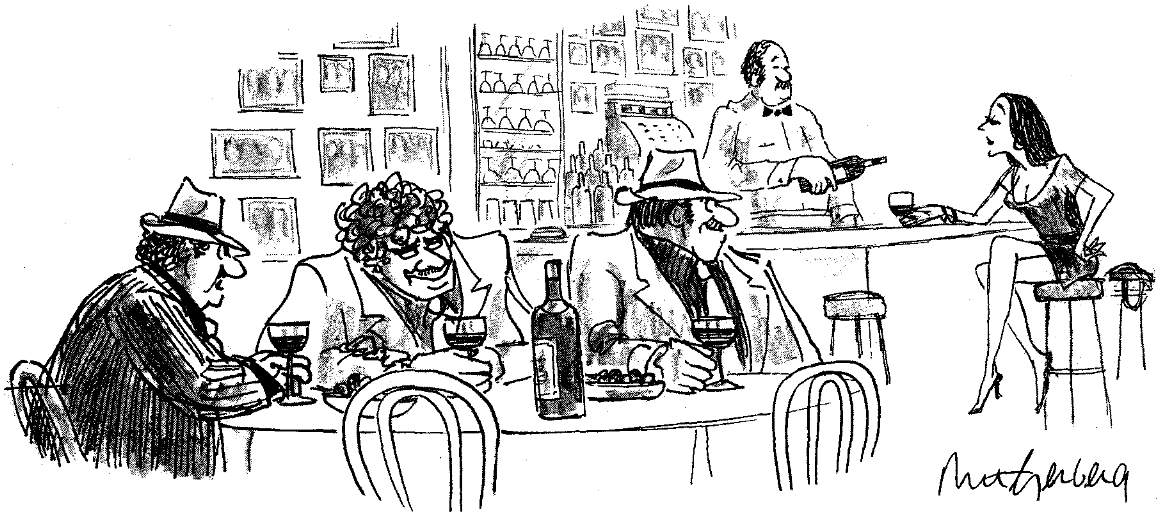




"I tell you, that federal witness-protection program did one helluva great job on Eddie."

• •

ily. The fanatics and war criminals who started them are still in power, borders are still in flux, and the bloody vortex of communal revenge and counter-revenge still churns. The present turmoil is, in fact, more bafflingly complex than ever. Since the successful Croatian offensive in the Krajina region in August, the Serbs have lost their air of invincibility, along with large tracts of territory. Now it is dispossessed Serb families who are in the news as victims of ethnic cleansing. The Muslims and the Croats, who were at each other's throats until early last year, fight as allies. And the Croatian Army abruptly looms as the biggest thug on the block. The most remarkable recent transformation, however, has been the rehabilitation of Slobodan Milosevic, the Serbian President. The so-called Butcher of Belgrade—widely believed to be the prime mover of the wars in both Croatia and Bosnia—has not only abandoned his plan to erect a Greater Serbia on the ruins of neighboring states (and has avoided indictment by the international war-crimes tribunal in The Hague), he has also reinvented himself as a statesman and man of peace, and has been accepted as such by the United States.

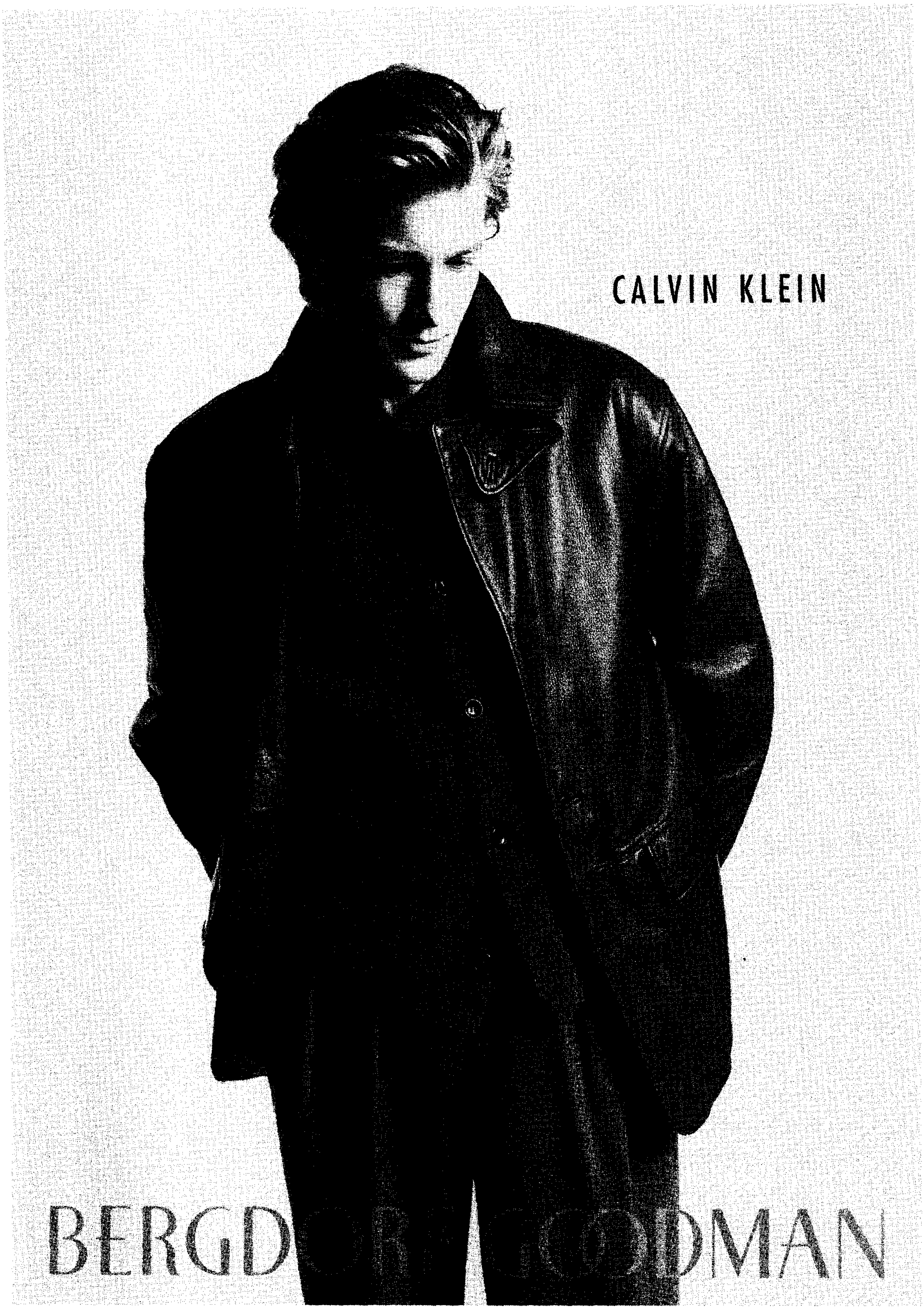
Keeping track of the Balkan dramatis personae is one thing; clarifying the principles being asserted, defended, and sacrificed in the former Yugoslavia is another, and in the end it is surely the more important. A host of fundamental international agreements have been severely battered: the U.N. Charter, the Geneva Conventions, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Basic values such as the rule of law, the inviolability of borders, and the safety of innocent civilians have been trashed beyond recognition by the war parties. On the more hopeful side of the ledger, the belated intervention by NATO and the newly energized American diplomacy behind the current negotiations have struck a blow for the crucial, neglected principle of collective security. Yet the terms of these negotiations should be understood for what they are: a triumph for bigotry, a reward for aggression. Bosnia will be partitioned along ethnic lines, just as the hot-eyed cleansers of cities and villages have wanted it to be.

Here is Dr. Radovan Karadzic, the ineffable leader of the Bosnian Serbs, telling Warren Zimmerman, the last American Ambassador to Yugoslavia, what he hopes Sarajevo—long one of the most cosmopolitan, tolerant cities in Europe—will be like when the war is over: "The city will be divided into Muslim, Serbian, and Croatian sections, so that no ethnic groups will have to live or work together." This division will be accomplished, Dr. Karadzic explains, by walls: "Our vision of Sarajevo is like Berlin when the Wall was still standing." Ambassador Zimmerman, writing in *Foreign Affairs*, compares Dr. Karadzic to "a monster from another generation, Heinrich Himmler." He also notes the doctor's resemblance to the South African racial engineers who dreamed up apartheid. Karadzic, of course, has been indicted by the Hague tribunal for war crimes.

There are millions of antinationalists in the former Yugoslavia—"the fourth side," Vaclav Havel has called them—and among the multitudes of refugees. Unfortunately, they are not in power. Like German Nazism and Soviet Communism before it, militant ethnic nationalism in the Balkans has created a vast diaspora of dissidents and victims. And, like those earlier diasporas, this one seems doomed to remain unorganized and politically ineffectual. The Bosnian government, though predominantly Muslim, was for years the pluralist beacon, the beleaguered defender of tolerance. But of late it, too, has become increasingly identified with ethnic nationalism, and its negotiators are publicly resigned to some form of partition.

The United States, which once opposed partition, rightly condemning it as a reward for ethnic cleansing, has chosen to pursue a peace settlement at any cost. The diplomatic wink given to Croatia's assault on the Krajina in August was the Kissingerian essence of this new policy. It made us an accessory to the largest single episode of ethnic cleansing in the war, and it got us more deeply entangled with the Croatian President, Franjo Tudjman, who may be the most dangerous Balkan nationalist of all, and who many believe has as much blood on his hands as Milosevic. These are the types of leaders whose representatives are now being convened, under American auspices. If they can reach an agreement, it is to their countries and tribal fiefdoms that thousands of American troops will be sent, along with many other international forces, to try to keep the peace. On a different scale, the historical models for this kind of massive effort at reconciliation and reconstruction are postwar Germany and Japan. The difference—not a small one—is that in those countries the war parties had been defeated.

—WILLIAM FINNEGAN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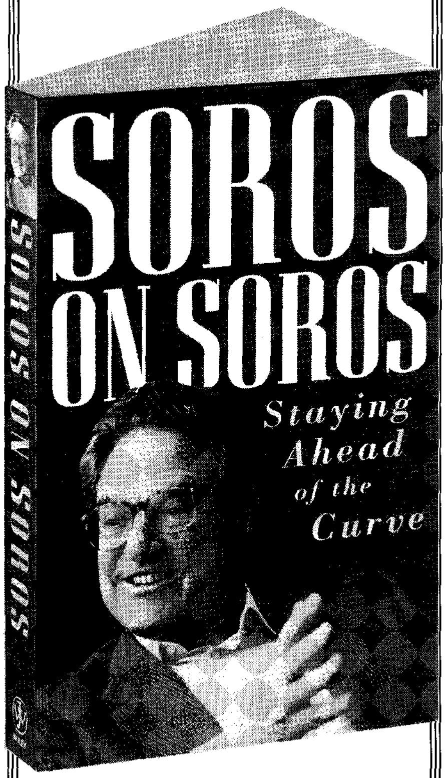

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IN THE MAIL

VINCE AND LISA FOSTER

It was oddly comforting to read the interview with Lisa Foster regarding her husband's suicide ("Life After Vince," by Peter J. Boyer, September 11th). We have just experienced the loss of our twenty-five-year-old son, a civil and environmental engineer working in Washington, D.C., to mental illness and suicide. Friends and family have searched in vain for reasons: stress at work, the hectic urban pace, impending marriage, distance from family. But Lisa Foster confronts the truth about mental illness: it is a terrible disease, and, as with other serious illnesses, the environmental factors contributing to it are complex and difficult to analyze. It is the disease itself that needs to be better understood. With more knowledge about diseases of the mind, those suffering from these afflictions—and their families—may eventually be helped.

ANNE BAILEY
Plattsburgh, N.Y.

Mr. Boyer captured the extremes in our society's attitude toward depression. We really do live in a world in which people are afraid that they'll put their careers at risk by seeking help from a psychiatrist or by even uttering the word "depression." At the same time, we really do live in a world where a large part of the population can, like Lisa Foster, appreciate depression in its naked simplicity: as a disease. What would happen if we all admitted that depression deserves to be viewed the way the common cold is—as annoying, prevalent, indiscriminate, and potentially dangerous, yet eminently treatable? Perhaps Vince Foster's great legacy is that people will remember how extraordinary his death seemed to them at the time and realize just how ordinary such deaths are.

JOSEPH SCARRY
Chicago, Ill.

After reading Lisa Foster's chronology of her husband's last, agonizing months, can any doubt remain concerning his suicide? Mrs. Foster has bravely shown us the inner workings of a family in conflict, juxtaposed against the political backdrop of Washington. Seen through the eyes of his wife, Vince Foster's painful emotional descent becomes the final testament to dispel the conspiracy theories.

CAROL DAVITT
Wakefield, R.I.

WINNING STREAKS

In the September 11th Talk of the Town story "The Player," it was noted that Gardnar Mulloy "as a hundred-and-three-time winner . . . has more U.S.T.A. National Championship golden balls than any other tennis competitor in history." But all senior women players are familiar with Dorothy Bundy Cheney, who has now won two hundred and sixty-one U.S.T.A. National Championship golden balls and is still going strong.

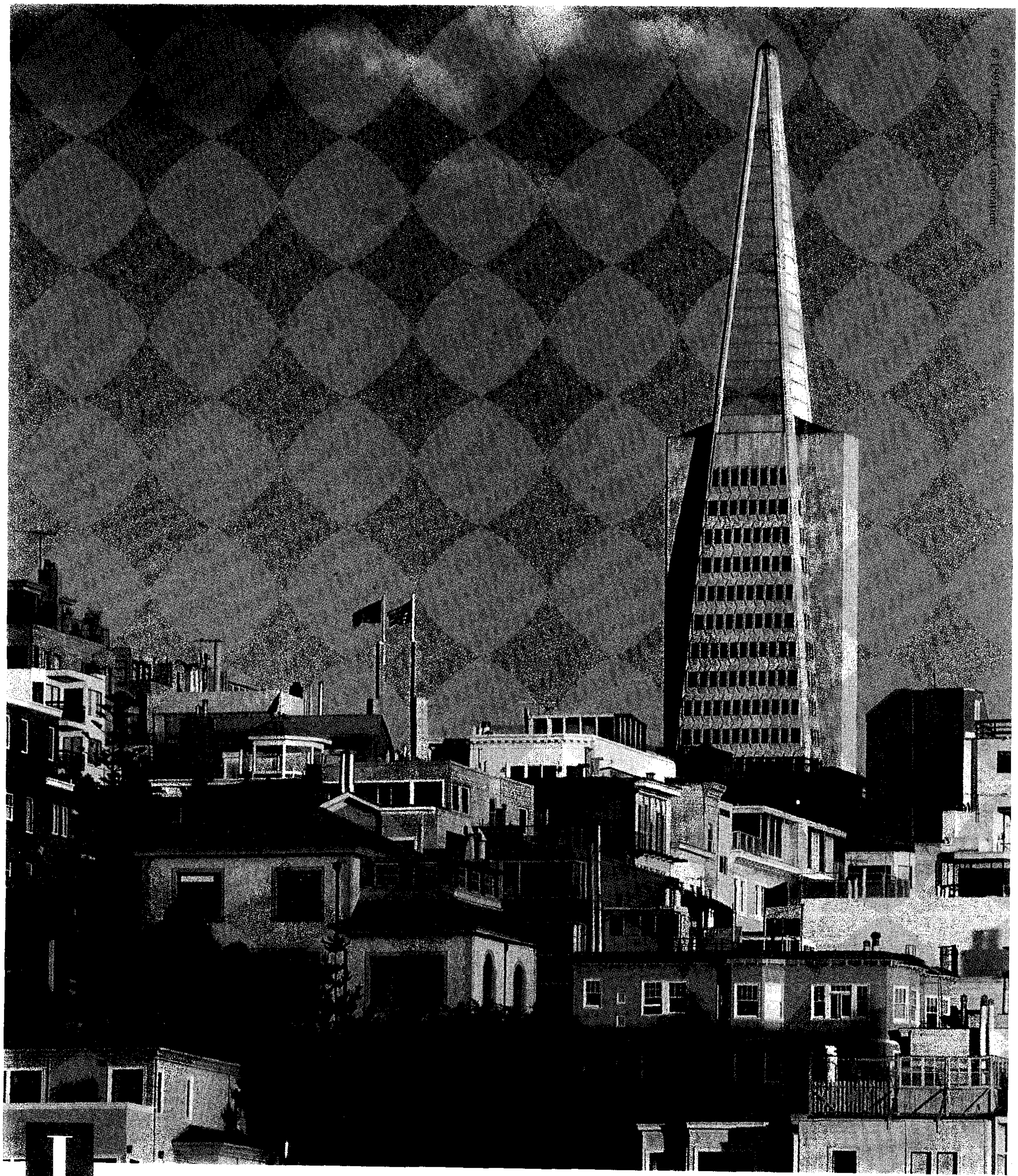
BETTY EISENSTEIN
Washington, D.C.

A WRITER'S TRIALS

I enjoyed Evan S. Connell's assessment of the kinds of questions a writer is asked, in his short story "A Cottage Near Twin Falls" (September 11th). But he forgot one I've heard: "Come meet my wife. What a life she's had! Now *that* would make a wonderful book."

LOUISE GIBSON
Luna Pier, Mich.

Letters should be as brief as possible, and sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to "In the Mail," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. They may be edited for length and clarity.



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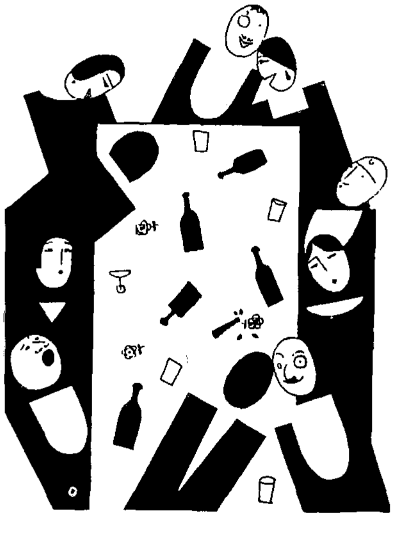

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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THE THEATRE

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

Alice—Robert Wilson, Tom Waits, and the Thalia Theatre of Hamburg have teamed up again, this time with writer Paul Schmidt and composer Kathleen Brennan, for a psychohistorical examination of Lewis Carroll and his "Alice" books. Oct. 6 at 7, Oct. 7 and Oct. 10-14 at 8, and Oct. 8 at 3. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100.)

Banjy Pussy Raging—Idris Mignott, in his new solo work, a comic look at sex, class, race, and glamour. Directed by Daisy von Scherler Mayer. Performances on Wednesdays at 7:30 (Oct. 4 is a preview), and Fridays and Saturdays at 10:30. Through Oct. 25. (Dixon Place, 258 Bowery, near Houston St. 219-3088.)

Company—The Roundabout Theatre Company opens its thirtieth-anniversary season with a revival of Stephen Sondheim and George Furth's 1970 musical about marriage. Directed by Scott Ellis and choreographed by Rob Marshall. Two previews on Oct. 4. Opens Oct. 5 at 8. (Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

Dangerous Corner—David Mamet directs the Atlantic Theatre Company's production of J. B. Priestley's 1932 mystery. In previews. (336 W. 20th St. 239-6200.)

Endgame—A Classic Stage Company production of Samuel Beckett's 1957 play. With Kathleen Chalfant, John Seitz, Irma St. Paule, and Alan Manson. Directed by David Esbjornson. Opens Oct. 5 at 7:30. (136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

Full Gallop—Manhattan Theatre Club's season opener examines the later career of the fashion editor Diana Vreeland. Mary Louise Wilson, who stars, co-wrote the script with Mark Hampton. Directed by Nicholas Martin. In previews. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

Garden District—Circle in the Square inaugurates its forty-fifth-anniversary season with two one-acts by Tennessee Williams ("Something Unspoken," starring Myra Carter and Pamela Payton-Wright and directed by Theodore Mann, and "Suddenly Last Summer," starring Elizabeth Ashley and directed by Harold Scott), presented under the title of the original 1958 double bill. In previews through Oct. 8. Opens Oct. 10 at 7. (50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

If This Isn't Love—Sidney Morris's comedy, which follows a pair of gay lovers from their teens to their forties, in a revival of the Glines' original 1982 staging. Opens Oct. 4 and continues through Oct. 29. (Grove Street Playhouse, 39 Grove St. 924-1198.)

Mathew in the School of Life—Composer John Moran and director Bob McGrath's collaboration, performed against a background of film and slide projections to a prerecorded assemblage of synthesized music, found sounds, and dialogue. Mr. Moran is one of three actors who portray the title character, a robot-angel from a science-fiction heaven. A Ridge Theatre production. In previews through Oct. 4. Opens Oct. 5 at 8. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793.)

Mrs. Klein—Uta Hagen stars in a new suspense drama by Nicholas Wright, about the death, in 1934, of psychoanalyst Melanie Klein's son. Previews begin Oct. 6. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)

Moonlight—Jason Robards, Blythe Danner, and Paul Hecht lead the cast in the Roundabout's production of Harold Pinter's latest play. Directed by Karel Reisz. In previews. (Laura Pels, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

Moscow Stations—From London, a limited-run production starring Tom Courtenay. Adapted by Stephen Mulrine from the 1980 novel by Venedikt Yerofeev. Ian Brown, of Edinburgh's Traverse Theatre, directed. Previews begin Oct. 5. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

Nixon's Nixon—Gerry Bamman is the title character and Steve Mellor is Henry Kissinger in Russell Lees's new play, set in the White House during a secret meeting on the night before the President's resignation. Opens Oct. 4 at 8 and runs through Oct. 22. (MCC, 120 W. 28th St. 727-7765.)

Northeast Local—Lincoln Center Theatre presents Terry Alexander, Eileen Heckart, Anthony LaPaglia, and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio in a new play by Tom Donaghy, which follows a working-class family through three decades. Gerald Gutierrez is the director. Previews begin Oct. 5. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Patti LuPone on Broadway—The musical-theatre star, in a six-week concert production. Previews begin Oct. 5. (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Picasso at the Lapin Agile—A play from the pen of Steve Martin, which had its première in 1993 at Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre. It is set in 1904, in a Parisian bistro, where a young Pablo Picasso (Tim Hopper) and a younger Albert Einstein (Mark Nelson) discuss big ideas. Randall Arney is the director. Previews begin Oct. 6. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200.)

Sin—Kelly Coffield plays an aerial traffic reporter in this comedy by Wendy MacLeod. Directed by David Petrarca. In previews. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103.)

Swinging on a Star—A musical tribute to the lyrics of Johnny Burke ("Misty," "Pennies from Heaven," "Moonlight Becomes You"), written and directed by Michael Leeds, with choreography by Kathleen Marshall. Previews begin Oct. 6. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Tallahassee—The new collaboration between playwrights Len Jenkin and Mac Wellman is a modern take on Ovid's Metamorphoses, set to music by Jim Ragland and Elise Morris. Previews begin Oct. 6. Opens Oct. 9 at 8. (Workhouse Theatre, 41 White St. 431-9220.)

The Tempest—The New York Shakespeare Festival's Central Park production, starring Patrick Stewart and directed by George C. Wolfe, moves to Broadway for a twelve-week run. Previews begin Oct. 10. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Two, Nikita—A suspense comedy by Jeffrey Hatcher, set in 1959, in which a citizen of the Soviet Union tries to defect to the United States while Nikita Khruschev is here visiting. Previews begin Oct. 5. (Chelsea Playhouse, 125 W. 22nd St. 627-7292.)

Victor/Victoria—Julie Andrews has returned to Broadway to star in a theatrical version of the 1982 movie. With Tony Roberts, Michael Nouri, and Rachel York. Written and directed by Blake Edwards. Choreography by Rob Marshall; score by the late Henry Mancini. In previews. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

Young Playwrights Festival—Presenting "Guyworld," by Bret LaGree; "The King," by Denise Ruiz; "Proof Through the Night," by Clarence Coo; and "This Is About a Boy's Fears," by Shaun Neblett. Opens Oct. 4 at 8 and runs through Oct. 29. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400.)

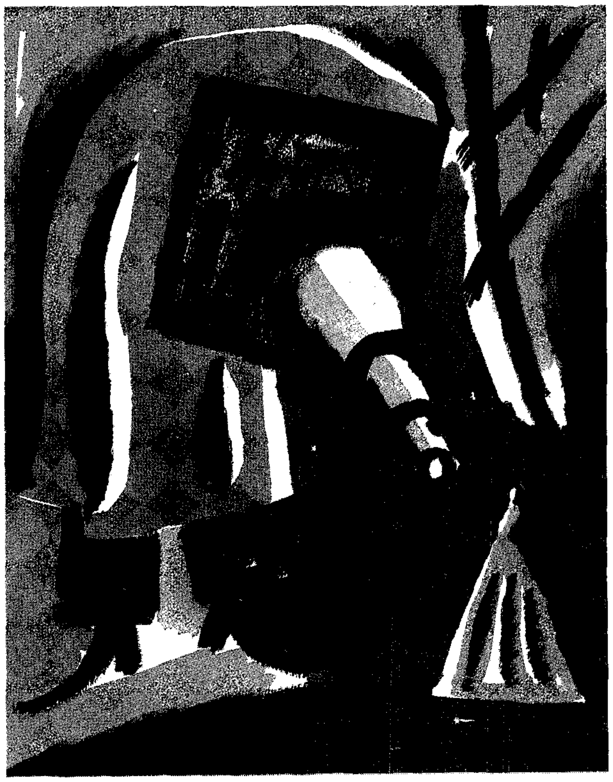
OPENED RECENTLY

Admissions—Austin Pendleton directs a new play by Tony Vellela, about the effects of hidden prejudice on a college campus. (New Perspectives, 750 Eighth Ave., at 46th St. 730-2030. Closes Oct. 17.)

After-Play—Anne Meara's comedy, about two couples who get together for an after-theatre dinner, stars Ms. Meara, Barbara Barrie, Larry Keith, and Merwin Goldsmith. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/13/95.) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 239-6200.)

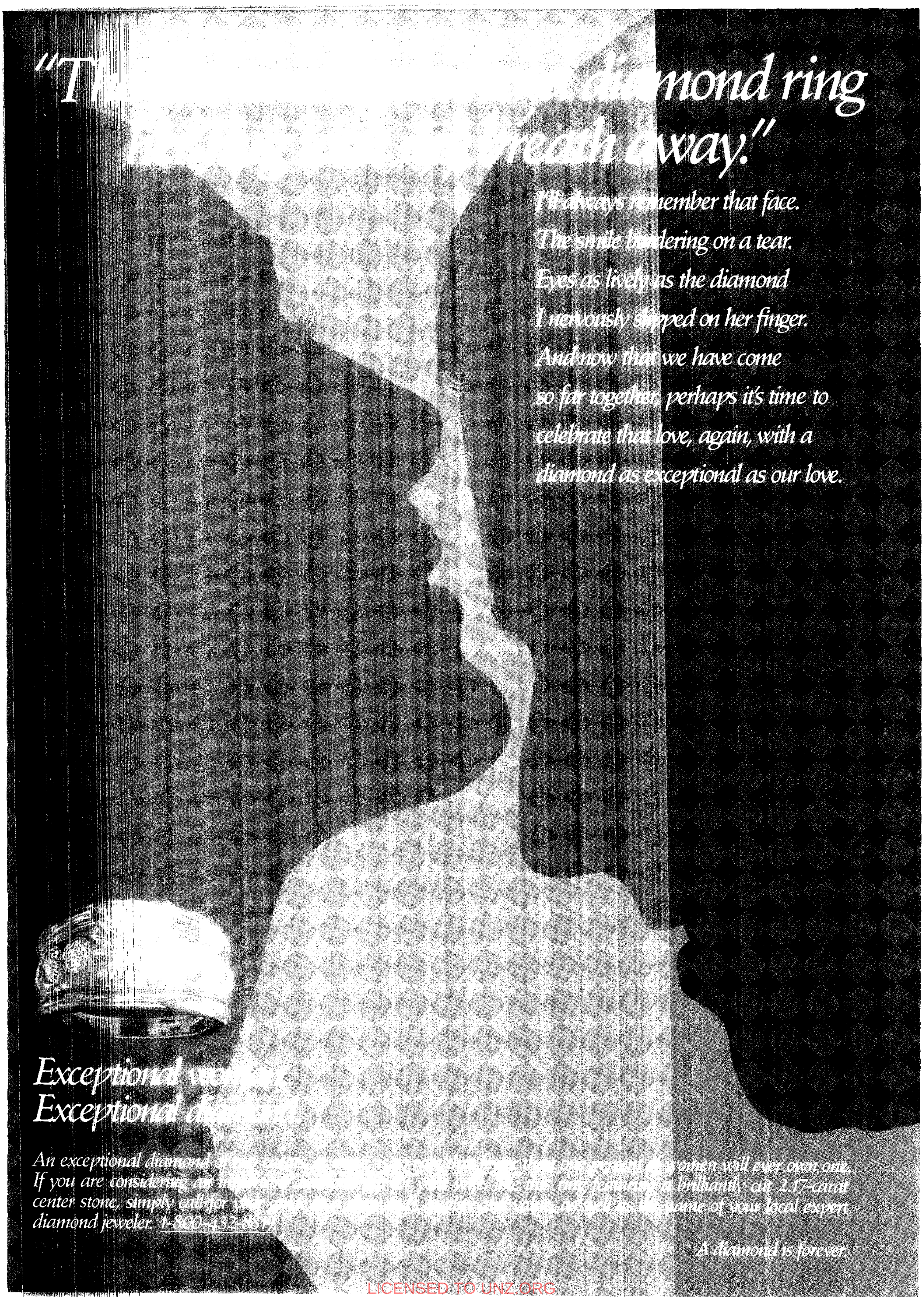
A Doll's House—The Pearl Theatre Company's staging coasts along securely on traditional tracks, though it's jolted now and again by a chatty tone that seems unsuited to an Oslo drawing room of 1879. Robin Leslie Brown plays Ibsen's songbird turned feminist, Michael Butler her dull and doting husband. Grey Johnson directed. (80 St. Marks Pl. 598-9802.)

A Dream Play—The Independent Theatre Company opens its eighth season with August Strindberg's despairing meditation on the difficulties of life, movingly directed by Paul Todaro. The cast is strong; Rajesh Bose, in



"Alice," at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

ALAIN PILON



"Th[illegible] diamond ring [illegible] breath away."

I'll always remember that face.
The smile bordering on a tear.
Eyes as lively as the diamond
I nervously slipped on her finger.
And now that we have come
so far together, perhaps it's time to
celebrate that love, again, with a
diamond as exceptional as our love.

Exceptional wo[illegible]
Exceptional d[illegible]

An exceptional diamond [illegible] than one percent of women will ever own one. If you are considering an [illegible] ring featuring a brilliantly cut 2.17-carat center stone, simply call for [illegible] value, as well as the name of your local expert diamond jeweler. 1-800-432-8819.

A diamond is forever.

particular, is good at bringing out the script's dark humor. (House of Candles Theatre, 99 Stanton St. 353-3088. Closes Oct. 7.)

Ecstasy—Mike Leigh's play takes place in a dismal North London flat in the winter of 1979. The late-seventies costumes and set are depressingly perfect, and the actors bring the six working-class characters to life with great specificity and vitality. (Judith Anderson, 422 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Closes Oct. 7.)

Edith Wharton's Manhattan—An adaptation of her novel "The House of Mirth." (Pulse Ensemble Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. 695-1596. Closes Oct. 14.)

The Emperor Jones—Kate Valk, Paul Lazar, and Dave Shelley are in the cast of the Wooster Group's production of O'Neill's 1920 drama. (Performing Garage, 33 Wooster St. 966-3651. Closes Oct. 15.)

The Food Chain—In Nicky Silver's new play, the paths of five New Yorkers cross, hilariously. The situations are familiar and sitcomish, but the writing is tangy and memorably funny, and the actors—especially Hope Davis, as a dithery poet, and Phyllis Newman, as a long-suffering Jewish matron whose idea of listening is to talk—give smart, wonderfully fresh performances. Robert Falls directed. (9/11/95) (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

Having Our Say—Bessie Delany (who died last month) and Sadie Delany, two sisters who passed the hundred-year mark, presented their vivid life stories in a 1993 best-seller; the book has been adapted beautifully by Emily Mann, who also directed. Gloria Foster and Mary Alice are brilliant as the sisters, who were taught by their family to "reach high" despite the dogging of Jim Crow. (4/24/95) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying—In this revival of Frank Loesser's 1961 musical, Matthew Broderick has polish and timing, but it's Lillias White's gospel solo in "Brotherhood of Man" that lifts the audience into a zone of joy. (4/24/95) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

Indiscretions—This production of Jean Cocteau's "Les Parents Terribles," a dark comedy about the perversities of desire in family life, is marred by heavy-handedness and an unsatisfying central performance: Kathleen Turner, playing a hysterically possessive mother, is an unfocussed sprawl with a distractingly unplaceable accent. Roger Rees, Dana Ivey, Cynthia Nixon, and Jude Law also star, under the direction of Sean Mathias. (5/15/95) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

Moon Over Buffalo—Carol Burnett and Philip Bosco star in Ken Ludwig's new comedy as husband-and-wife actors playing Buffalo with a touring company. Tom Moore is the director. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Party—In David Dillon's comedy, seven gay men get together to play a strip version of truth or dare, with terrifically funny (if occasionally didactic) results. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.)

Reinventing Daddy—A dysfunctional-family comedy by Gary Bonasorte, presented by Rattlestick Productions. (Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 353-3665. Closes Oct. 15.)

Same Old Moon—In Geraldine Aron's sentimental yet hard-edged comedy, an Irish-born writer who is in the process of separating from her husband returns home after years abroad, triggering a flurry of memories. Madeleine Potter is superb as the central character (she plays her from ages nine to forty). The strong performances of Terry Donnelly, as her mother, and Risteard Cooper (a dead ringer for Eugene O'Neill), as her tyrannical, ailing father, show off the breadth of the Irish Rep's talent. Charlotte Moore directed. (Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. 279-4200. Closes Oct. 15.)

Signature Theatre Company—Presenting a double bill of dramas by this season's playwright in residence, Adrienne Kennedy: "Funnyhouse of a Negro" and "A Movie Star Has to Star in Black and White." (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400.)

Standing By—If you arrive at the theatre in the mood for TV, this love story—about an ailing Wasp flutist and a Jewish writer who meet on a plane, fall in love overnight, and discover pat cultural differences—should satisfy you nicely. (It even has its own prerecorded theme song.) Presented by the York Theatre Company. (Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 935-5820. Closes Oct. 15.)

Sylvia—In A. R. Gurney's comedy, a dog named Sylvia (Jan Hooks) brings meaning to the life of a middle-aged currency trader (John Cunningham) while driving a canine-shaped wedge between him and his wife (Mary Beth Peil). Directed by John Tillinger. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

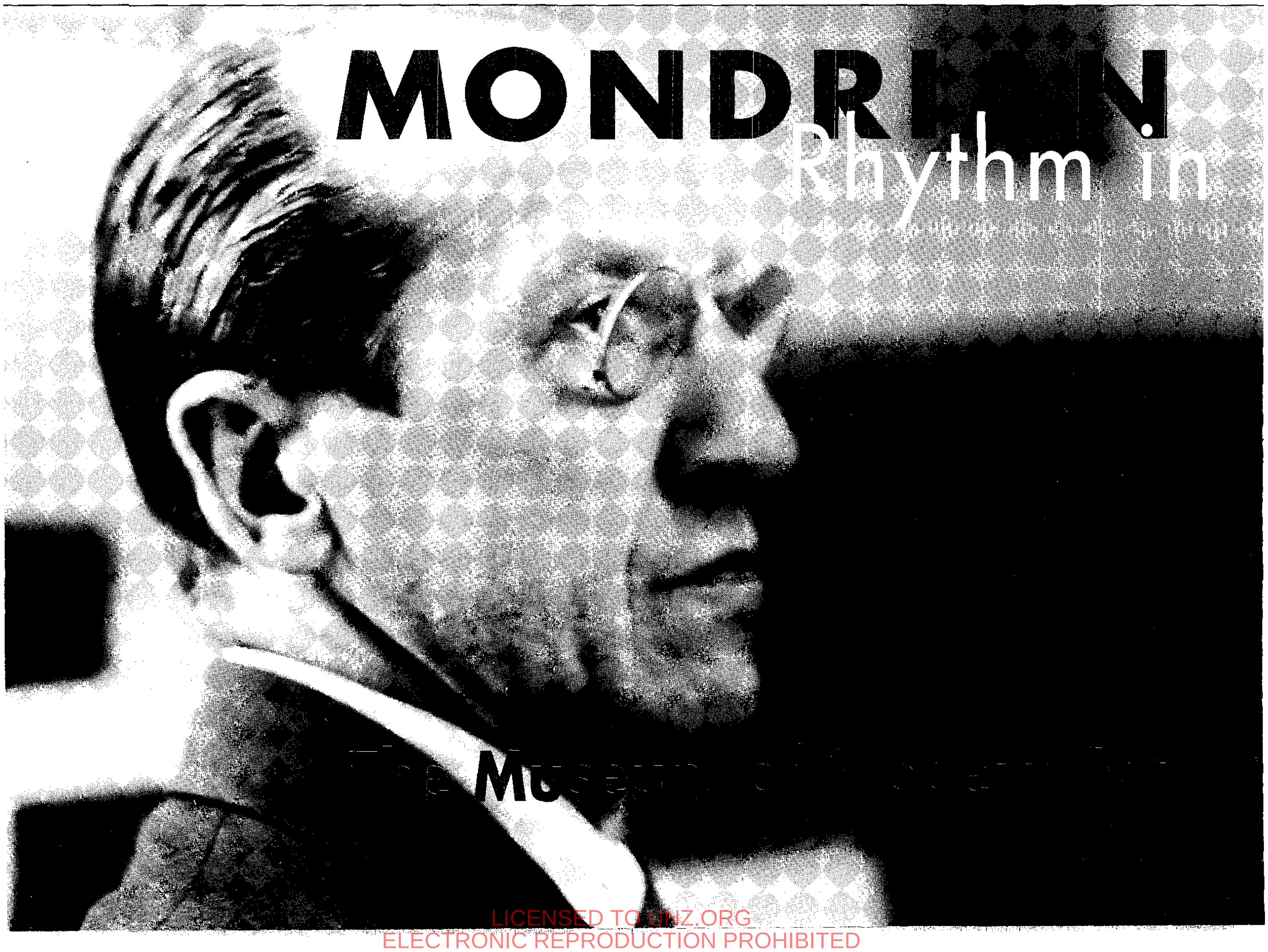
Third New Immigrant Play Festival—"Odysseus' Homecoming," by Colombian playwright Ben-Hur Carmona, is the final offering in the annual showcase of new works. (26th Street Theatre, 309 E. 26th St. 683-9772. Closes Oct. 8.)

Too Jewish?—Avi Hoffman sets about reviving Yiddish in this mixture of songs and stories. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

Waiting for Godot—A solidly played production of Samuel Beckett's modernist classic, directed by Eve Adamson. (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

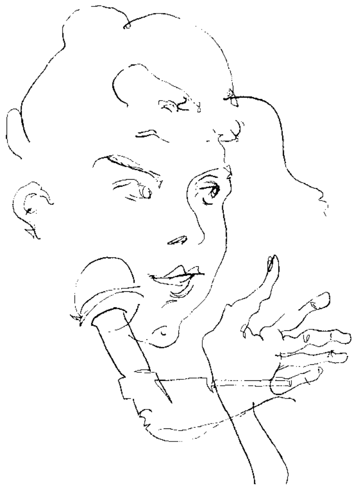
What Ever—Heather Woodbury brings her eight-part solo serial, in which she plays ten major characters and more than ninety minor ones, back to P.S. 122. Directed by Dudley Saunders. Fridays and Saturdays at 10:30, through Oct. 28. (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

Working Class—Richard Hoehler's play, recently seen at the Edinburgh Festival, takes a look at American laborers. (Mint, 311 W. 43rd St. 315-9434. Closes Oct. 8.)



LONG RUNS

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST: Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CRAZY FOR YOU:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **DEATH DEFYING ACTS:** Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **GRANDMA SYLVIA'S FUNERAL:** SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 691-1555. . . . **GREASE!:** Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE HEIRESS:** Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **ROB BECKER'S DEFENDING THE CAVEMAN:** Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100. . . . **SHOW BOAT:** Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100. . . . **SMOKEY JOE'S CAFÉ—THE SONGS OF LEIBER AND STOLLER:** Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. . . . **STOMP:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. 477-2477. . . . **SUNSET BOULEVARD:** Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 307-4007. . . . **SWINGTIME CANTEEN:** Blue Angel, 321 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200.



Heather Woodbury, in "What Ever."

LIZZIE HOLLEY

DANCE

RALPH LEMON DANCE COMPANY—Lemon, one of the most consistently rewarding choreographers of the past fifteen years, presents a weeklong swan song: his seven-member company will disband after this run. The program includes the return of "Their Eyes Rolled Back in Ecstasy," as well as the elegantly athletic "Killing Tulips." Of the latter, Lemon says, "I didn't want to give myself a deadline, so it's been a work in progress for two years; now we have to show it, because we've run out of time. But I don't think of it as completed—more like something that will just evaporate." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Oct. 4-6 at 8, Oct. 7 at 2 and 8, and Oct. 8 at 2 and 7:30.)

"COMPASS"—For the title piece, the choreographer and set designer Jamie Avins has created a set that revolves as the dancers move from room to room onstage. Throughout the program's second work, "Strand," Avins' dancers perform inside a narrow corridor. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Oct. 5-7 at 8 and Oct. 8 at 3.)

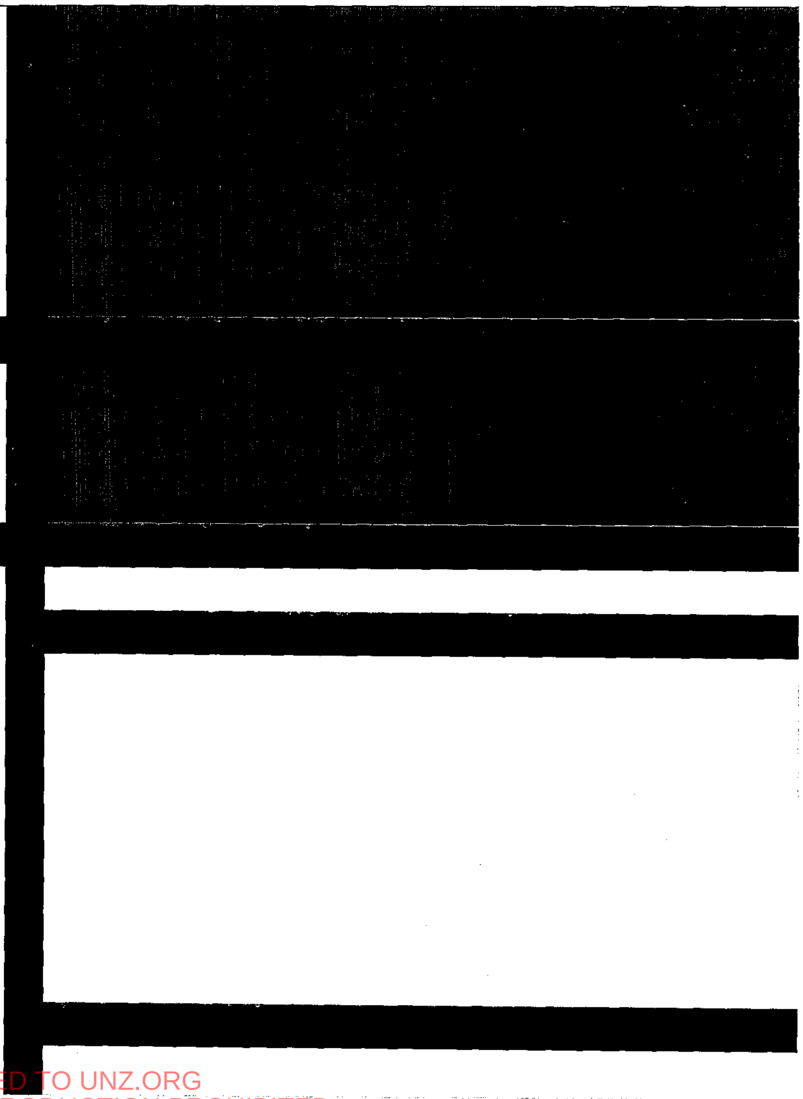
BILL YOUNG & DANCERS—The company appears in "Kindling," a medley of brief dances that showcase the individual skills of the troupe's seven members. The evening concludes with the ensemble work "Veiling." (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194. Oct. 5-8 at 8:30.)

"WORKS AND PROCESS AT THE GUGGENHEIM"—Well, not exactly at, or even near. The museum presents four evenings of dance and discussion at West Side venues. Oct. 7-8 at 8: Annie-B Parson's Big Dance Theatre performs "City of Brides" and excerpts from "Lucifer Kicking All Night Long," two works (involving matrimonial and nocturnal rites, respectively) choreographed for the company's five women. (Rose Building, Lincoln Center. For more information, call 423-3575.) . . . ¶ Oct. 9-10 at 8: In "Homage to the Swedish Ballet," choreographer Murray Louis takes inspiration from costumes created for the Swedish troupe by such artists as Léger and Picabia in the nineteen-twenties, when the company was based in Paris. (John Jay College Theatre, 899 Tenth Ave., at 58th St. 423-3575.)

"FRIDAYS AT NOON"—The free dance series at the 92nd Street Y, in which choreographers present work for informal discussion, opens with "The Last Two," a duet by Nancy Allison, "Rubbernecking," a group work by Pam Tanowitz, and a solo by Sean Curran. (Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. Oct. 6 at noon.)

DURA MATER—Choreographer Kriota Willberg's troupe performs four works, including "One Liners" (a ragout of gestures taken from punk rock, cheerleading, animal life, etc.) and "Shiatsu Dance," a work combining dance phrases with movements from Japanese bodywork. (Merce Cunningham Studio, 55 Bethune St. Oct. 6 at 9 and Oct. 7 at 8. For information about tickets, call 714-7784.)

PAUL TAYLOR DANCE COMPANY—Opening night of the company's forty-first season. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212. Oct. 10 at 8. Through Oct. 22.)



the abstract

October 1–January 23

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Composition No. 4, 1938–42 (detail). The Saint Louis Art Museum

NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

Hip-hop-alooza—Though these mega-events are traditionally underwhelming, this time the performances just might go on longer than a strobe light's flash. Naughty by Nature's Treach versus Queen Latifah is an inspiring prospect; so is the hope that Latifah and Salt-n-Pepa will perform material from the upcoming compilation "Ain't Nothing But a She Thing." The Notorious B.I.G. (a.k.a. Biggie Smalls) has been racking up some mighty phat sales these days, but Mount Vernon's own Heavy D, with his smooth, creamy style, should be the real crowd-pleaser. Mary J. Blige, the Judy Garland of New Jill Swing, brings a touch of introverted angst; Jodeci offers gorgeous gospel harmonies. Filling out the margins are Brandy and Soul for Real (bubblegum soul) and the Wu-Tang Clan (ultra-hard-core rap). But the real story may be the reunion of the excellent combo Guy, featuring keyboardist Teddy Riley and the criminally underrated Aaron Hall, one of the finest singers of his generation. (Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. Oct. 5 at 7:30.)

R.E.M. / Grant Lee Buffalo—Most rock-and-roll acts die before they get old, but R.E.M.'s decade-and-a-half rise from hovels to hockey stadiums hasn't shaken the quartet's psychic balance. Guitarist Peter Buck, bassist Mike Mills, and drummer Bill Berry (now fully recovered from the brain aneurysm he suffered last March) still come across as regular guys, but the real secret of the band's artistic health lies in the elliptical imagination of singer and songwriter Michael Stipe. His early vocals were a blur of mumbles, but recently his singing has grown clearer, as has his graceful stream-of-consciousness imagery. / Grant Lee Buffalo, the band, is the brainchild of Grant Lee Phillips, a guitarist and singer who is one of the canniest (and most indefinable) new songwriters in rock. Michael Stipe called the band's 1993 début, "Fuzzy," the "best record of the year—hands down" and promised the Los Angeles-based trio an opening slot on a future tour—a promise he's making good on now. (Meadowlands Arena. 1-201 935-3900. Oct. 6 at 8. . . . ¶ Nassau Coliseum. 1-516 794-9300. Oct. 7 at 8.)

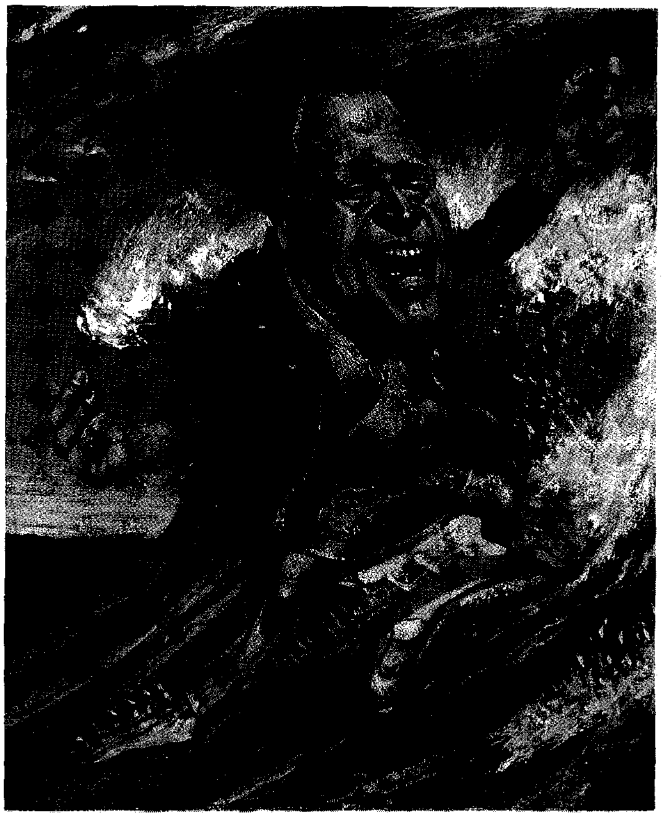
"Stomp and Holler"—Cornettist Olu Dara, an avant-jazz soloist and roots-bound bluesman, joins a handful of vocalists for an evening of improvised music from the Deep South. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Oct. 5 at 8.)

Illinois Jacquet Big Band—The tenor saxophonist, best known for his sumptuous sound and for his smooth, Basie-like band. (Pace Downtown Theatre, Spruce St. between Nassau and Gold Sts. 346-1715. Oct. 5 at 8.)

Jacky Cheung—The Chinese pop star. (Paramount, Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. Oct. 6 at 8.)

Jacky Terrasson—The defiantly eccentric pianist. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Oct. 6 at 8.)

Keith Jarrett—Say what you will about histrionics—whenever he takes the stage on his own, chords crash, tremolos ring, and the earth moves. There's also a lot of grunting. Flanked by two equally volcanic players, drummer Jack DeJohnette and bassist Gary Peacock, he is transformed into a lyrical, probing jazzman and a sympathetic team player—proving once again that there's strength (and humility) in numbers. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Oct. 7 at 8.)



Dick Dale, at Irving Plaza.

JARRETT HUDDLESTON

"Where the Mississippi Meets the Nile"—Blues and African music with Brandon Ross, Graham Haynes, and Steve Neil. (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct. 7 at 8:30.)

Boukman Eksperyans / Papa Jube—An evening of Haitian funk. (Walt Whitman Hall, Brooklyn College. 1-718 951-4500. Oct. 7 at 8.)

The Radiators / God Street Wine—This hard-working New Orleans band has a rowdy national following that falls somewhere between the Deadheads and Jimmy Buffett's parrotheads. Their marathon concerts are as funky as they are long. / God Street Wine, another collection of bluejeans-and-tie-dye-clad youngsters devoted to the seventies (a decade they actually experienced through a filter of "Sesame Street" and stewed apricots) recently released "$1.99 Romances," their major-label début. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Oct. 7 at 8.)

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan—Considered by some to be the world's greatest living singer, and certainly the éminence grise of the world-music scene, Ali Khan can claim among his many fans Michael Jackson, Sting, and Peter Gabriel, whose Real World label distributes the best of his hundred-odd albums. (In Pakistan, Ali Khan bootlegs are traded with a fervor that would make Bruce Springsteen blush.) You may have heard his voice on the soundtracks of "Natural Born Killers" and "The Last Temptation of Christ." A practitioner of the Sufi devotional vocal art known as *qawwali*, which literally means "utterance," he is a mountain of a man who performs with his ten-piece "party," all of whom play sitting down. And a party it is. As the band churns out a burbling harmonium-and-tabla drone, the singer unleashes a torrent of melisma and ululation that seems to come from another world. Then, as the music grows louder and his ecstatic, serpentine phrases soar, he stretches out a hand to the heavens, and a shower of dollar bills rains down on the stage from the audience. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Oct. 7-8 at 8.)

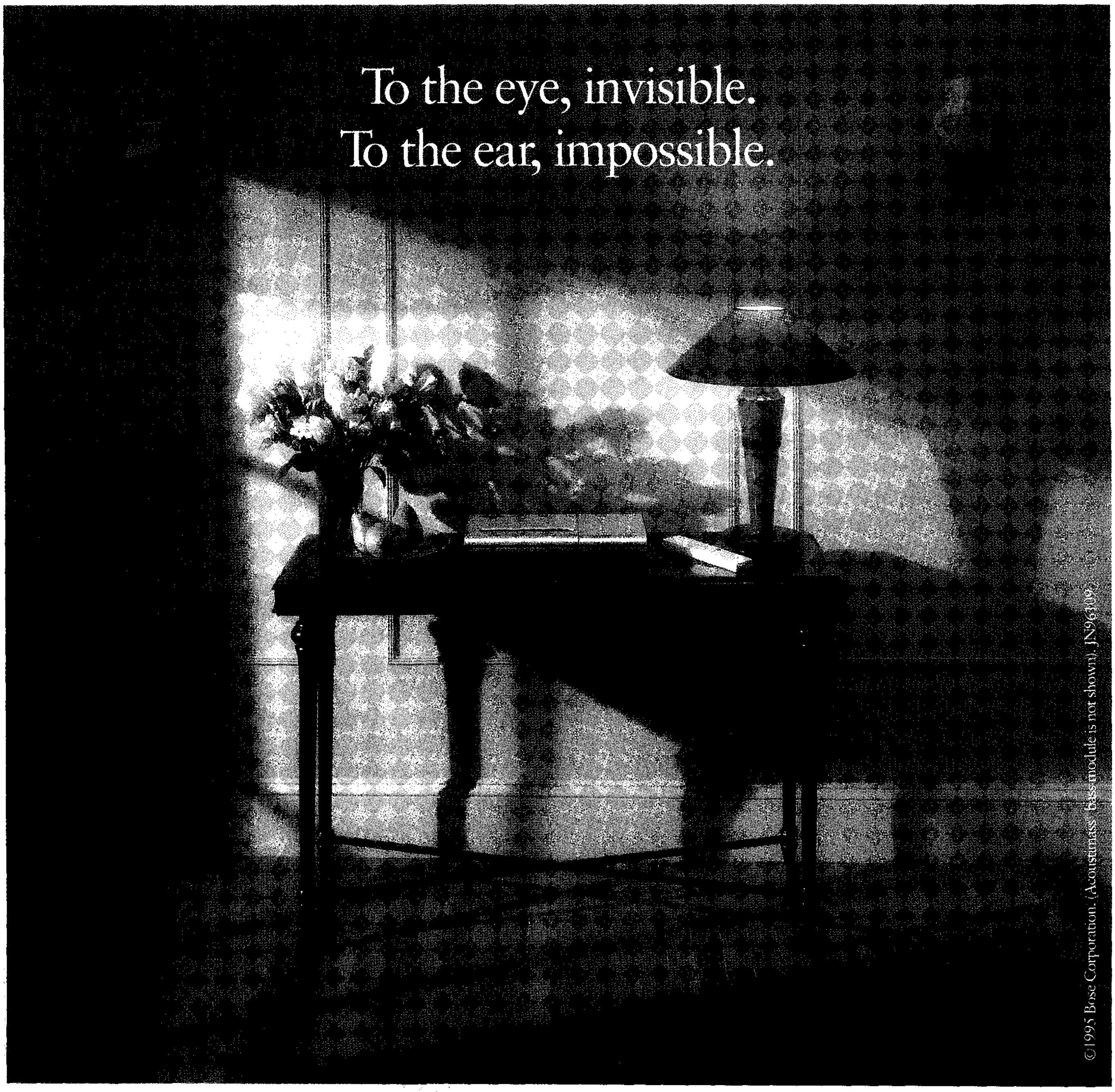
Raffi—This gentle citizen of the world (he was born to Armenian parents in Cairo and raised in Canada) recently celebrated twenty years of children's songs about spiders, elephants, and baby belugas. He's hit a few bumps recently—"Bananaphone" and his abortive "adult" record, "Evergreen, Everblue"—so now Raffi is back to being Raffi, and if we're lucky, he'll be around long after Barney is extinct. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. Oct. 8 at 7.)

Santana / Jeff Beck—Guitar gods in midtown. Back in '69, Carlos Santana's band called itself the Santana Blues Band, and in the early seventies the guitarist's assimilationist blend of salsa rhythms and bluesy solos gave a world beat to post-Hendrix rock. Although his recent studio albums have been power-chord retreads—somebody get this man the right producer!—his live shows are always impassioned affairs. / El Becko is rumored to spend more time these days tinkering with old cars than playing music, but he's still the guitar hero's guitar hero. His highly imitable poses launched a thousand air guitars. With African pop star Angelique Kidjo, a fine if inexplicable opening act. (Paramount. Oct. 8 at 8.)

Lisa Gerrard—As one half of the Irish-Australian duo Dead Can Dance, Gerrard has earned a devoted following for her flowing-robed, ashen-faced persona. Raised by Irish parents in a Turkish community in Australia, she is the product of a particularly felicitous cultural grafting. Her solo début, "The Mirror Pool," is a crepuscular treat, full of her haunting a-cappella wailing and her spidery dulcimer playing. (Town Hall. Oct. 9 at 8.)

Natalie Merchant / Cesaria Evora—Some people regard the former lead singer of Ten Thousand Maniacs as the embodiment of everything that's good and right in the world. But pretty much everyone else thinks Merchant is way too schoolmarmish to be a rock star. (Of course, so is her buddy Michael Stipe, and he doesn't get half the flak.) Still, her intentions are pure, and so is her warm, tangy voice. And some of the frail folk-pop ditties on her first solo album, "Tigerlily," do grow on you after a few listens, provided that you stay awake. / A breath of cool tropical air from São Vincente (a tiny port island off the coast of Senegal), Evora is known as the barefoot diva, a reference to her performance style and to the earthy, laid-back feel of morna, the dreamy bossa-nova blues that makes her eponymous new release on Nonesuch so delightful. (Beacon Theatre. Oct. 9-10 at 8.)

Dick Dale—Another American legend rescued from obscurity by Quentin Tarantino, Dale, with his blistering guitar work, helped turn the opening credits of "Pulp Fiction" into a high-speed punch in the stomach. In the early sixties, his staccato, tremolo-ridden leads helped invent surf rock, and he recorded such masterpieces of the genre as "Miserlou" and "Let's Go Trippin' " (though the high point of his career was probably his appearance, along with Frankie and Annette, in "Muscle Beach Party"). He spent most of the seventies as a nostalgia act and real-estate investor, but things really hit bottom in the eighties, when he went through a bitter divorce and, in a freak accident, suffered second-degree burns over much of his body, including his left hand. These days, Dale has his "Pulp" cachet, a new wife, and a new record deal, which yielded last year's "Tribal Thunder," a surf-rock apotheosis. (Irving Plaza, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. 777-6800. Oct. 10 at 8.)



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Peter Frampton—For those who came of age in the seventies, Frampton was either a joke or a peerless back-seat aphrodisiac. Blessed with Roger Daltrey's hair, Marc Bolan's sex appeal, and a small arsenal of electronic gadgets that transformed his stadium-rock-by-the-numbers guitar into not-so-subtle innuendo, the man rode to glory on "Frampton Comes Alive," an epic live album whose gatefold became the marijuana-cleaning surface of choice for a generation of potheads. An appearance as Billy Shears in the box-office bomb "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" and a near-fatal car crash in 1978 brought an end to his airwave-clogging peak, but he can still wow the faithful. (Academy, 234 W. 43rd St. 307-7171. Oct. 10 at 8.)

Mary Chapin Carpenter / The Mavericks—"Mainstream" is frequently a put-down, but in the case of this thirtysomething singer-songwriter, it's a tribute: her moving, emotionally direct songs unearth the muck and the treasures of everyday experience. She's the woman that a lot of women with a yen for folk-rock would have liked to be when they grew up, and she's on a roll—her last two albums were terrific. (Personal to M. C. C.: What happened to the hyphen?) / Formed six years ago in Miami, the Mavericks have grown into the best country band around. Their lead singer, Raul Malo, is the son of Cuban immigrants, and his deep, mournful voice can handle everything from an understated, lovelorn ballad to an Orbison wail. (Paramount. Oct. 10 at 8.)

Mariah Carey—The vocalist. (Madison Square Garden. Oct. 10 at 7:30.)

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it is advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Vocalist **Weslia Whitfield** (in through mid-October) interprets the American popular canon with a light touch. Her early set features songs by Harry Warren and Victor Young, and in her late one she does selections from her aptly titled new CD, "Nice Work." Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Through Oct. 8: **Joe Williams and the Count Basie Orchestra.** To hear this singer with this ensemble is to experience jazz transcendence. Williams can moan the blues like Big Joe Turner's half brother or inhabit a sophisticated ballad as if instructed by Cole Porter himself. The Basie band may no longer have its aphoristic leader, but it can still bruise its way through swinging material. Many of Williams's collaborations with the Basie band are immortal; numbers like "Every Day I Have the Blues" and "Alright, Okay, You Win" never fail to rattle the roof. Violinist **Stephane Grappelli** begins a two-night run on Oct. 9. The near-feral intensity that Django Reinhardt brought out of Grappelli has mellowed into the pristine classicism of a commanding player. The repertoire, rhythmic gait, and commitment to hard swing are pure nineteen-thirties; the passion and intelligence are timeless. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—**Barbara Cook** is in command of this urbane dinner-and-music room through mid-October, backed up by her longtime pianist and arranger Wally Harper. Her voice remains almost defiantly that of the nineteen-fifties Broadway ingénue, and her material is as supple as a fresh corsage.

Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—Oct. 6: **T. J. Kirk,** with **Charlie Hunter.** The **Mingus Big Band** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven, 57 E. 57th St. (758-5757)—A sleek piano-and-bass room in the Four Seasons Hotel. Dining.

Iridium, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Through Oct. 8: the **Leon Parker** band. From his pared-down kit to his anything-goes take on jazz, Parker is an original—all rhythm and pure pleasure. The **Terence Blanchard** quartet takes over on Oct. 10. Dining.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Oct. 4-7: Piano and bass with Nat Jones and Lisle Atkinson.

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—Oct. 4: John Zorn's **Xu Feng.** Oct. 8: More loud music/silent film with the **Paradox Trio** and Eisenstein's "Potemkin" (at 3 P.M.). Oct. 9: **David Murray** big band.

TABLES FOR TWO

Dining around town

Les Halles, 411 Park Avenue S. (679-4111)—"What would you rather give up—women or garlic?" asks Fernandel, the French comedian of an earlier era who leers out from the row of photographs that brighten the walls of this informal Park Avenue charcuterie. A rubber-faced vaudevillian famous for his salacious gormandizing ("What do you think of American sweater girls?"), Fernandel is the unofficial muse and mascot here, though there's nothing funny about the food. The operative word at Les Halles is meat, a point made perfectly clear by the huge vitrine up front, where choice cuts of beef, pork, and lamb cozy up against a rainbow of sausages like the jewels in Tiffany's windows.

You can walk out of here with a steak the size of a Buick, or you can, of course, choose to be seated—a reflex that may occur involuntarily after one of the resturant's denim-clad waiters walks by with a dripping *côte de bœuf* (for two) or a blackened sirloin with shallot-herb gravy, a massive knife slapping against his side. The meat is carved tableside, and it is, to borrow a phrase, like butter. In fact, at Les Halles even the fat is delicious (though each flank comes with a mesclun salad, just to keep you honest). The steak tartare is tempting even to the timid; the wafer-thin pommes frites are mandatory. Les Halles also serves traditional bistro fare, like cassoulet, escargots, and blood sausage with caramelized apples. For the contrarian in every group, there's chicken, too. (Open daily for lunch and dinner. Entrées $15-$23.)

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Through mid-October: **Mel Tormé.** Singer, actor, author, arranger, songwriter, drummer, movie buff, and old gun collector, the Velvet Fog is the latest singer on the I'm-gonna-be-hip-with-those-kids bandwagon (thanks in part to a Mountain Dew commercial and an appearance on "Seinfeld.") The eternal enfant terrible began singing professionally around kindergarten, and he hasn't stopped since. And, as with many a terrible infant (Mickey Rooney, Sammy Davis, Jr., Orson Welles, etc.), you either dig him or you don't. But his gifts are undeniable, and at seventy he's still in command of his warm, fluid baritone and his aggressively hip delivery. (**Cleo Laine** subs for Mel on Oct. 7.) On Mondays, Woody Allen continues his night job as clarinet player in the **New Orleans Funeral and Ragtime Orchestra,** a Dixieland-jazz ensemble. Closed Sundays.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—With her svelte silhouette, haute couture, and piquant coif, **Karen Akers** (through mid-October) is every inch—some seventy-two—the chanteuse. (Moviegoers may remember her as the Copacabana songbird in "The Purple Rose of Cairo.") Closed Mondays.

S.O.B.'s, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—Oct. 9: **Eddie Palmieri.** Brazilian jazzman **Nana Vasconcelos** begins a two-night stand on Oct. 10. Dining.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Through Oct. 8: the **Mal Waldron** quintet. This pianist has spent the past forty years whittling notes away to the bare essentials, paring down his resources without paring down his vocabulary. During his edge-of-your-seat solos, he'll back himself into a corner, then gracefully escape—a tightrope walk that brings the questing spirit of early-sixties jazz alive again. Dining.

Tavern on the Green, Central Park W. at 67th St. (873-3200)—Vocalist Jo Thompson continues through Oct. 8. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—**Ray Drummond,** New York's most reliable bassist, is in through Oct. 8. When you lay down the kind of shag carpet that Drummond regularly does, anything on top sounds good. Saxophonist Craig Handy in the front line is an added bonus. The **Geri Allen** trio begins a weeklong run on Oct. 10. The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

ROCK, ETC.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Oct. 8: **John Wetton,** best known as a sometime vocalist/bassist for the art-rock combos Asia, U.K., and King Crimson. Oct. 10: **Gino Vanelli,** the hirsute jazz-and-R. & B. oddity.

The Cooler, 416 W. 14th St. (229-0785)—A lavender and stainless-steel vault deep in the heart of the meat district. Tuesday nights are given over to experimental d.j. spinoffs.

Don Hill's, 511 Greenwich St. (219-2850)—A tidy little SoHo bar with an above-average P.A. system and topnotch local bands on the docket. . . . ¶ Friday night is Squeeze Box, a vinyl-and-velvet gay glamfest, hosted by Mistress Formika.

Limelight, Sixth Ave. at 20th St. (807-7850)—Oct. 8: The return of the **Gang of Four.** Perhaps the best-loved Socialist rock band from the golden age of New Wave, the Gang distinguished themselves with a handful of memorable singles ("To Hell with Poverty," "I Love a Man in a Uniform") and a jagged, riff-driven elegance. With **Engine 88.** Wednesday night is Disco 2000, a fin-de-siècle blowout.

Mercury Lounge, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—Oct. 5-6: **Robyn Hitchcock,** founder of the Soft Boys and avatar of pop psychedelia. **Jim Lauderdale** (Oct. 10) has a little bit of Roger Miller-style mischief in his soul, but his carefully crafted, slightly surreal confections are far from novelty numbers. His last album, "Pretty Close to the Truth," continued the wonderful journey he started in 1991 with "Planet of Love."

Supper Club, 240 W. 47th St. (921-1940)—Oct. 10: The **October Project.**

Tramps, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—**Edwyn Collins** sashays in on Oct. 5. This dandified singer's "A Girl Like You" scored high marks for its easy bounce and polysyllabic lyrics, but it's really the fuzz-tone guitar, which floats through the song like a bumblebee, that keeps the kids coming back for more. The opening act, **Ivy**—a kind of Franco-American Everything But the Girl, whose pleasing début album "Realistic" could well become a dorm-room favorite—will get things rolling with supple, confident tunes about *l'amour.*

ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Goya in the Metropolitan Museum of Art," which comprises the Met's entire collection of works by the Spanish master—including seventeen paintings and more than three hundred and fifty etchings, lithographs, and drawings—addresses the reattribution of certain works over time. . . . ¶ "John Singleton Copley in America," seventy-five portraits of affluent Bostonians and New Yorkers, done before the artist packed up for London in 1775. . . . ¶ A large number of gold objects, from massive chest plates to delicate nose ornaments, are on display in "River of Gold: Precolumbian Treasures from Sitio Conte, Panama." . . . ¶ The museum's collection of large paintings and frescoes by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo has been reinstalled, at the top of the main staircase, above the Great Hall. . . . ¶ The hundred works in "The Renaissance in France: Drawings from the École des Beaux-Arts, Paris" form a survey of superb draftsmanship. Through Nov. 12. . . . ¶ Trenchcoats, epaulets, tartans, aviator glasses, khaki, and many other elements of civilian dress were recruited from the militaries of the world. "Swords Into Ploughshares," in the Costume Institute, offers a hundred outfits and a host of visual links between the wardrobes of the warrior and leisure classes. Through Nov. 26. . . . ¶ "Pages of Perfection: Islamic Paintings and Calligraphy from the Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg." . . . **NOTE:** The museum's roof garden is open, when weather permits, until Oct. 29. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—It's blockbuster time again. "Piet Mondrian: 1872-1944," which comes to New York from The Hague, via Washington, D.C., is a medium-sized blowout, with a hundred and sixty paintings and drawings, close to half of them from the thirties and forties. The MOMA installation will have a few exclusives: "Broadway Boogie Woogie" and the unfinished "Victory Boogie Woogie," and a re-creation of the artist's last studio, at 15 E. 59th St. . . . ¶ "Alfred Stieglitz at Lake George," ninety-three photographs taken at the artist's upstate retreat, most of them from the twenties and thirties. . . . ¶ "Light Construction" examines, through models, large photographs, and drawings, the concepts of transparency and translucency in contemporary architecture. . . . ¶ Leon Levinstein's street photographs of people in New York neighborhoods from the fifties through the seventies. Through Oct. 12. . . . ¶ "Impressions of Nature" brings together a wide variety of modern landscape prints and paintings. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 8:30.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Claes Oldenburg: An Anthology" features more than two hundred of the Popster's hard and soft sculptures, collages, and drawings for existing large-scale projects and proposed colossal monuments. Starts Oct. 6. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

Guggenheim Museum SoHo, 575 Broadway—A survey of the conceptual photography of Dieter Appelt, supplemented by sculptural objects made by the artist for inclusion in these images. Through Nov. 5. . . . ¶ Fluorescent light sculptures from 1963 to 1987 by Dan Flavin. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6, and Saturday evenings until 8.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A terrific and illuminating double bill: "Edward Hopper and the American Imagination" (through Oct. 15) and "Florine Stettheimer: Manhattan Fantastica" (through Nov. 5). Hopper's work, with its solitary figures moving like somnambulists through otherwise vacant streets and interiors, embodies a very American vision of urban loneliness transformed by inexplicable moments of transcendence. Stettheimer, by contrast, epitomized, in both her art and her life, the fertile marriage of café society and the avant-garde. Her effervescent paintings record the milieu she cultivated in moods of brittle irony and poetic reverie. . . . ¶ Works on paper by Jackson Pollock. Through Oct. 23. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—A hundred and forty botanical watercolors, illustrations, engravings, and lithographs are on view; a third of them are of orchids. Among the artists represented are Pierre-Joseph Redouté, Margaret Mee, Marilena Pistoia, and Georg Dionys Ehret. . . . ¶ The skeletons of some one hundred saurischian and ornithischian dinosaurs have been cleaned and repositioned, and they're waiting for you. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—"From Jackson to Lincoln: Democracy and Dissent," a helping of Americana—including letters, manuscripts, books, and drawings—from the Gilder Lehrman Collection. The issues of the day may have a familiar ring: race and gender relations, states' rights versus federal authority, Evangelicalism, foreign intervention, and temperance. . . . ¶ Mostly French works on paper, by such masters as Watteau, Fragonard, David, Ingres, and Hüet, are on display in "Fantasy and Reality: Drawings from the Sunny Crawford von Bülow Collection." (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10:30 to 5; Saturdays, 10:30 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Photo: Ivo Von Renner; Leica minilux and Kodak Lumiere 100; 1/2 sec at f/2.4; Dog: Bruce

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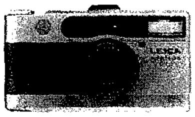

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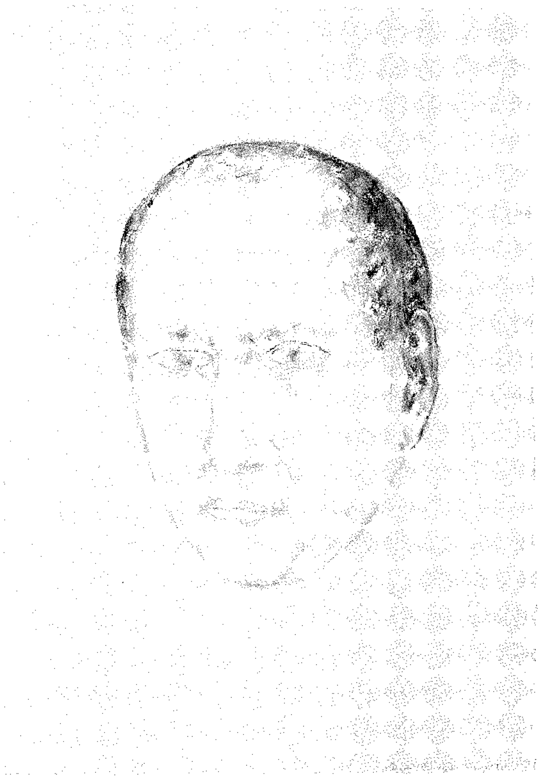

Self-portrait by David Rabinowitch (Blum).

Museo del Barrio, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—"Amanaplanacanalpanama," an installation by Luis Camnitzer, includes a canal made of resin and a canal lock made of children's construction toys. . . . ¶ "Four Corners/Cuatro Esquinas," recent oil paintings and charcoal drawings by José Morales. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

George Condo / Julio González (1876-1942)—A return to form for the painter, whose show here last year—a series of Old Masterish pastiches—was a disappointment. Condo's art derives from two apparently contradictory eighties trends: appropriation and a return to lush easel painting. Once again he exploits the kind of absurd juxtapositions that delighted the Surrealists, dressing up faceless mannequins, after the manner of de Chirico, in ornate costumes straight out of Velázquez. As a current version of art for art's sake, there's something endearingly meaningless about this work. / Drawings and studies by this pioneer in welded-iron sculpture. Both shows through Oct. 21. (Pace Wildenstein, 32 E. 57th St.)

William H. Johnson (1901-70) / **Beauford Delaney** (1901-79)—Expressionistic oils and watercolors from the thirties and primitive-style silk screens from the early forties. / Impastoed, uninhibitedly colored abstract paintings from the sixties. Both shows through Nov. 11. (Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St.)

Marisol / Altoon Sultan—The artist's first solo show in six years consists of her familiar portrait sculptures, made of wood beams and plywood. / Unpopulated plein-air farmscapes in oil, gouache, and egg tempera. Both shows through Oct. 21. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Jackson Pollock (1912-56)—An exhibition of recently discovered paintings and works on paper covering all phases of the artist's career, from the Bentonesque, frankly corny "Family Scene" (circa 1934-36) to Surrealist-influenced work of the early forties to mature work—in particular, "Vertical" (1949), which looks like a small, narrow rectangle cut out of one of the artist's larger, grander canvases. Through Oct. 28. (McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Pat Steir—"North Sea Passage." A departure from the recent "Waterfalls" series: mostly large-scale new paintings in which turbid whorls of paint reminiscent of both Turner and Pollock conjure images of stygian abysses. Steir seems to have her mind on the sublime, with lousy weather representing awe and terror. Through Oct. 14. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

"Early Mondrian"—Paintings, drawings, and watercolors from the 1890s through the 1920s, focussing on landscapes, flowers, and nudes. A small complement to the Mondrian show at MOMA. Through Nov. 11. (Janis, 110 W. 57th St.)

"From Left to Right: Social Realism in Germany and Russia, Circa 1919-33"—The links between German art of the Weimar era and Soviet revolutionary images are explored through the works of John Heartfield, George Grosz, Dmitri Moor, Otto Dix, Käthe Kollwitz, Viktor Deni, and many others. Through Nov. 4. (Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St.)

Short List—**JAMES LEE BYARS,** Werner, 21 E. 67th St. Open Mondays; through Oct. 21. . . . **JOSEPH DI GIORGIO,** O'Hara, 41 E. 57th St. Through Oct. 21. . . . **JANET FISH,** Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through Oct. 28. . . . **SONIA GECHTOFF,** Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through Oct. 28. . . . **GRACE KNOWLTON,** Hirschl & Adler Modern, 21 E. 70th St. Through Nov. 4. . . . **SOL LE WITT,** Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. Through Oct. 21. . . . **LADIS W. SABO,** York, 21 E. 65th St. Open Mondays, closed Saturdays; through Oct. 14.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

SoHo Arts Festival—The block party of the past two years has metamorphosed from an evening to a day to a weekend. On Oct. 6-8 you can take a tour, with Tom Sokolowski, of some of the hundred and fifteen participating galleries; attend performances by the Paul Taylor Dance Company, the José Limon Company, downtown hipsters Cibo Matto, and various electronic-music mavens; check out CyberSoHo, a series of on-line projects; and walk, walk, walk. For information and event times, call 925-4200.

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Keith Edmier—Sculptures by a quirky young artist whose background as a designer of film special effects includes such *Fangoria* fare as "Reanimator 2: Bride of Reanimator" and "Texas Chainsaw Massacre 3." His art looks like an exquisitely formal version of his horror/sci-fi work. "Nowhere (Insideout)," for example, is an extraterrestrial "window" made of semi-transparent purple resin, buckling inward some three feet and featuring a nasty, scarlike crack; it sustains a mood of barely controlled menace and still remains bizarrely gorgeous. Through Oct. 21. (Petzel, 26 Wooster St.)

Felix Gonzalez-Torres—Fourteen black-and-white photographs of vultures circling in the sky, accompanied by extremely deep quotations on the subject of the downtrodden artist, from Arthur Rimbaud, Pier Paolo Pasolini, and Barbra Streisand. As *if.* Through Oct. 14. (Rosen, 130 Prince St.)

Toland Grinnell—"Booty," a large-scale multimedia installation that has taken over the entire gallery, even the front desk. In the wake of Matthew Barney's spectacular success, a number of young male artists have produced elaborate works exploiting weird materials and exploring, in some vague way, the construction of masculinity. Grinnell's obsession is vinyl—he has transformed the gallery into a huge, Oldenburgian soft sculpture tied to an inane narrative about a shipwrecked pirate trying to communicate with an albino ape. The show doesn't quite hold together (with a premise like that, how could it?), but there's a certain charm to Grinnell's inventive Naugahyde mania. Through Oct. 14. (Basilico, 26 Wooster St.)

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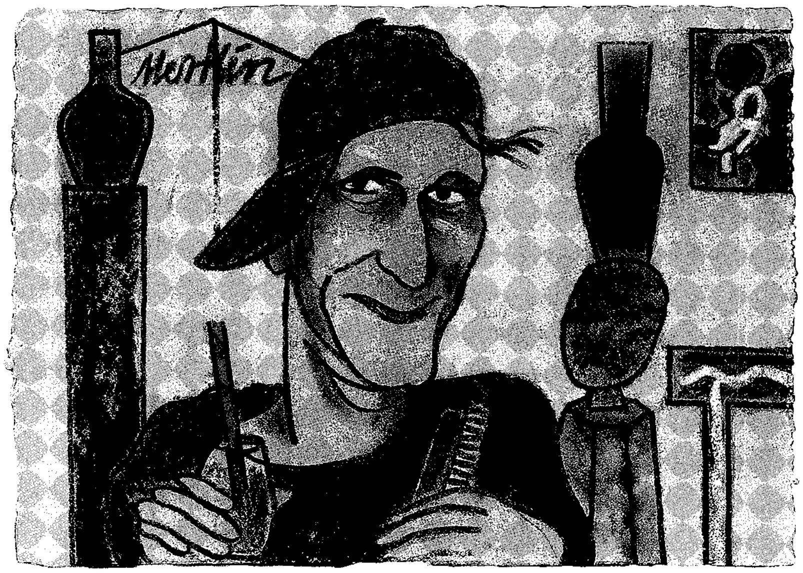
William L. Hawkins (1895-1990)—Paintings and mixed-medium constructions by a self-taught artist. Through Oct. 14. (Ricco/Maresca, 152 Wooster St.)

Ronald Jones—A puzzling installation that riffs on gardening and hell, as instanced in Milton and at Auschwitz, in two and three dimensions (posters and a printed scrim; architectural models and a stairway that goes nowhere). You will want to read Jones's texts more than once, and the musical accompaniment by Todd Levin—a tango in the style of Astor Piazzolla—swings deliciously. But maybe it's time to declare a moratorium on art about the death camps. Through Oct. 14. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

Robin Lowe—Strange, intriguing oil portraits that render human subjects as lifeless blobs, like garden gnomes made of lard, in a painterly style suggestive of Philip Pearlstein without his humanity. Obviously based on snapshots, they manage to be both spontaneous and lifeless. Through Oct. 28. (Bonakdar, 130 Prince St.)



Louis Mueller, at Parrasch.

RICHARD MERKIN

Louis Mueller—Floor lamps and wall sconces in bronze, silver, and Venetian glass. Through Oct. 28. (Parrasch, 588 Broadway.)

David Rabinowitch—"Box Trough Assemblages" (1963), sculptures made with many sixty-by-forty-inch sheets of metal. Through Oct. 28. (Blum, 99 Wooster St.)

Alison Saar—Among the sculptural icons in this show are "Terra Rosa," a clay figure representing a maternal spirit of the earth, and "Ho'," a figure assembled from old tin, nails, and a rusted garden-variety hoe. Through Nov. 4. (Kind, 136 Greene St.)

Roger Shimomura—Paintings by a Japanese-American artist who takes Eastern and Western themes and symbols and slaps them together in pure Pop style. In the show's opening image, Superman makes love to a geisha. Homages to the masters abound, but the quotations from Warhol and Lichtenstein remind us how original their visions were and how narrow Shimomura's is. The canvases are well-executed, in flat colors that might be tasteful, or, then again, might just be dull. Through Oct. 7. (Steinbaum Krauss, 132 Greene St.)

Kiki Smith—A mighty impressive show; Smith takes powerful command of our retinas and our imaginations. There are several body images—both human and animal, in wax, bronze, pewter, paper, and fibreglass—and some nonfigurative pieces as well. "Ice Man," an eight-foot-tall male form in translucent fibreglass, looms like an angel, high on the back wall. Twenty-seven cast-bronze sculptures of dead crows litter the floor, telling a story that fascinates us even though we *don't know quite what it is.* Through Oct. 21. (Pace Wildenstein, 142 Greene St.)

Jackie Winsor—New, smallish plaster-and-concrete square sculptures set into the gallery's walls. Through Oct. 21. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Group Show—Upstairs, a suitably lean, terse retrospective of Arte Povera. Three of the movement's founders—Luciano Fabro, Mario Merz, and Pino Pascali—are represented with one work each. Fabro's "Efeso," a massive block of snow-white marble hanging from the ceiling on steel cables, is particularly powerful. Downstairs, "'monument' for V. Tatlin," a key Dan Flavin work from 1967, shines on. (Are these the original fluorescent tubes? What happens when they burn out?) Through Oct. 28. (Gladstone, 99 Greene St.)

Short List—**PETER DUDEK** and **GORDON VOISEY,** Patrick Callery, 66 Greene St. Through Oct. 14. . . . **RAFAEL FERRER,** Hoffman, 429 West Broadway. Through Oct. 18. . . . **BILL JENSEN,** Boone, 417 West Broadway. Through Oct. 21. . . . **KERRY JAMES MARSHALL,** Shainman, 560 Broadway. Through Oct. 7. . . . **MATTHEW MC CASLIN,** Klein, 40 Wooster St. Through Oct. 14. . . . **SHIRIN NESHAT,** Nosei, 100 Prince St. Through Nov. 1. . . . **RAYMOND PETTIBON** and **SIGMAR POLKE,** Zwirner, 43 Greene St. Through Oct. 14. . . . **ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG,** Gagosian, 136 Wooster St. Through Oct. 21. . . . **ALESSANDRO TWOMBLY,** Kasmin, 74 Grand St. Through Oct. 14. . . . **ROYCE WEATHERLY,** Gavin Brown, 558 Broome St. Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, noon to 7; through Oct. 7. . . . **RÉMY ZAUGG,** Brooke Alexander, 59 Wooster St. Opens at noon; closed Tuesdays; through Nov. 18.

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

Athletic Auctions—Memorabilia relating to baseball, billiards, basketball, boxing, hockey, and football, from Babe Ruth's player piano and Ty Cobb's monogrammed smoking jacket to Willie Mosconi's pool table and Jack Dempsey's glove bag. (Christie's East, 219 E. 67th St. 395-6300. Oct. 5.)

Photography Auctions—Oct. 5: Offerings include an 1846 daguerreotype of the United States Capitol and Man Ray's 1932 "Larmes de Verre." (Sotheby's, York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000.) . . . Oct. 5-6: A vintage print of Man Ray's "Noire et Blanche, Paris" and striking images by Strand, Stieglitz, and Steichen are standouts among the lots. (Christie's, Park Ave. at 59th St. 546-1119.) . . . Oct. 7: Photographs by Ansel Adams, Dorothea Lange, Dmitri Baltermants, and many others. (Swann Galleries, 104 E. 25th St. 254-4710.)

Metropolitan Antiques—A twentieth-century-design show. (110 W. 19th St. 463-0200. Oct. 6-8.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Dieter Appelt / Edward Weston (1886-1958)—Conceptual self-portraiture, often in the form of several photographs arranged in grids. (A retrospective of Appelt's work is at the Guggenheim Museum SoHo, through Nov. 5.) / A group of rare, vintage prints from the twenties through the early forties, along with several of the photographer's pepper and shell studies. Both shows through Oct. 14. (Pace Wildenstein MacGill, 32 E. 57th St.)

Eugène Atget (1857-1927) and **Walker Evans** (1903-75)—A dry, intermittently compelling exhibit of fifty works, with several very fine juxtapositions. The selection—of a few interiors and public sculptures, and many architectural studies and street scenes—suffers from a lack of variety, especially in the Atgets. But there is plenty of evidence of both artists' devotion to documentation, clarity, and directness. Evans's "Upstate, New York"—a pathetic image of a run-down neoclassical house, much too elaborate for its modest size—exemplifies the way he often tempered those qualities with an unforgiving severity. "Tuileries Alexandre Combattant," showing a public sculpture of a warrior on one knee, recoiling from an unseen enemy, is the best example here of Atget's gentle vitality. Through Nov. 25. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Hans Bellmer (1902-75)—The German Surrealist's photographic activity was sporadic. Besides the well-known doll studies, he had only two other subjects—his lovers Nora Mitrani (1946) and Unica Zurn (1958)—and his explicit nudes of them are on view, along with a selection of drawings. Through Oct. 21. (Ubu, 16 E. 78th St.)

Imogen Cunningham (1883-1976)—A survey of her long, prolific career, including portraits, figures, landscapes, cityscapes, and flowers. Through Nov. 4. (Greenberg, 120 Wooster St.)

Karl Lagerfeld—Portraits and landscapes by the German fashion designer. Through Oct. 11. (Leica, 670 Broadway. Opens Saturdays at noon.)

Sally Mann—Recent photographs of the artist's family, in which the rural Virginia landscape assumes a prominent role. Through Nov. 4. (Houk Friedman, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

Richard Misrach / Harold Edgerton (1903-90)—In the latest series from his desert explorations, Misrach looks up into the sky and comes away with expansive—sometimes riveting—fields of color. / "Acts of Destruction," the fascinating effects of arrows, bullets, hammers, and explosions on innocent balloons, playing cards, and telephone books. Both shows through Oct. 21. (Danziger, 130 Prince St.)

Tina Modotti (1896-1942)—Street photographs, still-lifes with puppets, and other works made in Mexico between 1923 and 1929, which reveal a unique marriage of political consciousness and formalist aesthetics. Through Nov. 4. (Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st St.)

Todd Webb / Andrew Moore—"New York, 1946," vintage prints of scenes in Harlem, on the Third Avenue El platform, in Chinatown, at Coney Island, and on the Lower East Side. / Large-scale works from the series "New York Variations," in which the artist conflates architectural details (from the Public Library, the old City Hall subway station, the ruins of the mental hospital on Roosevelt Island), producing poetic explorations of the city. Both shows through Oct. 14. (Richardson, 560 Broadway.)

"Being There"—A cunning, refreshingly low-key clutch of landscape photographs—patches of earth, sea, and day and night skies—which deals with the artists' relationship to their subjects. Viewed up close, Richard Misrach's deep-blue evening sky is as optically disorienting as the best James Turrell work. Geographical orientation is dissolved in Hiroshi Sugimoto's side-by-side black-and-white seascapes: the two pictures look nearly identical, yet one shows the Sea of Japan and the other the Atlantic Ocean off Newfoundland. Through Oct. 7. (Baldacci, 41 E. 57th St.)

"Seeing Things"—Fifty photographs from 1844 to the present, extremely well chosen and presented. Among the artists are Lisette Model, August Sander, Charles Clifford, Diane Arbus, Bernd and Hilla Becher, and Garry Winogrand. Through Oct. 7. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St.—"The Garden of Earthly Delights: Photographs by Edward Weston and Robert Mapplethorpe." Still-lifes, nudes, and portraits, hung side by side in comparative groupings. Through Nov. 26. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Short List—**JIMMY DE SANA,** Hearn, 530 W. 22nd St. Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6; through Oct. 22. . . . **MITCH EPSTEIN,** Tenri, 575 Broadway. Through Nov. 4. . . . **NEIL FOLBERG,** Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. Through Oct. 20. . . . **RICHARD GERE,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. Through Oct. 14. . . . **ALLEN GINSBERG,** De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St. Through Oct. 7. . . . **FRANK GOHLKE,** Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. Through Oct. 14. . . . **JUDY LINN,** Feature, 76 Greene St. Through Oct. 14. . . . **MARILYN MINTER,** Postmasters, 80 Greene St. Through Oct. 8. . . . **MARGARET MORTON,** Lowinsky, 578 Broadway. Through Oct. 31. . . . **ALEXANDER RODCHENKO,** Schickler, 52 E. 76th St. Through Oct. 31. . . . **WILLY RONIS,** Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Through Oct. 28. . . . **PENELOPE UMBRICO,** Saul, 560 Broadway. Through Oct. 14. . . . **BOYD WEBB,** Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway. Through Oct. 21.

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art and the Guggenheim Museum SoHo.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Toss-Up

THE gremlins have gotten into New York's concert schedule again: on October 8, at 3, two of the world's finest pianists will offer recitals that coincide to the minute. Maurizio Pollini will perform at Carnegie Hall, and Daniel Barenboim at Avery Fisher Hall; the only wrong choice would be to miss them both. Pollini's program is the first of seven in which he'll plumb the depths of Beethoven's "complete" piano sonatas. (We put quotation marks around "complete" because only thirty are actually listed in the lineup, the modest Opus 49 pair presumably not passing muster as masterpieces.) Those who appreciate Pollini's textural clarity and his nearly infallible technique will have other chances to hear him this year. But if you miss this concert, you won't be able to claim to have heard his whole cycle.

In this town, Barenboim is more often spotted on a podium than on a piano bench, but his occasional recitals usually pack revelations. His style, always evolving, is hard to pigeonhole; he reinvents his approach according to the repertoire (Beethoven, Schoenberg, and Brahms in this go-round, his only local performance this season). Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 3 (Op. 2, No. 3) opens the first half of Barenboim's concert and the second half of Pollini's; fanatical admirers of the piece could manage to hear both, clearing their minds with a brisk walk in between.

(The box-office number for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall is 247-7800 and for the Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St., 772-4448.)

OPERA

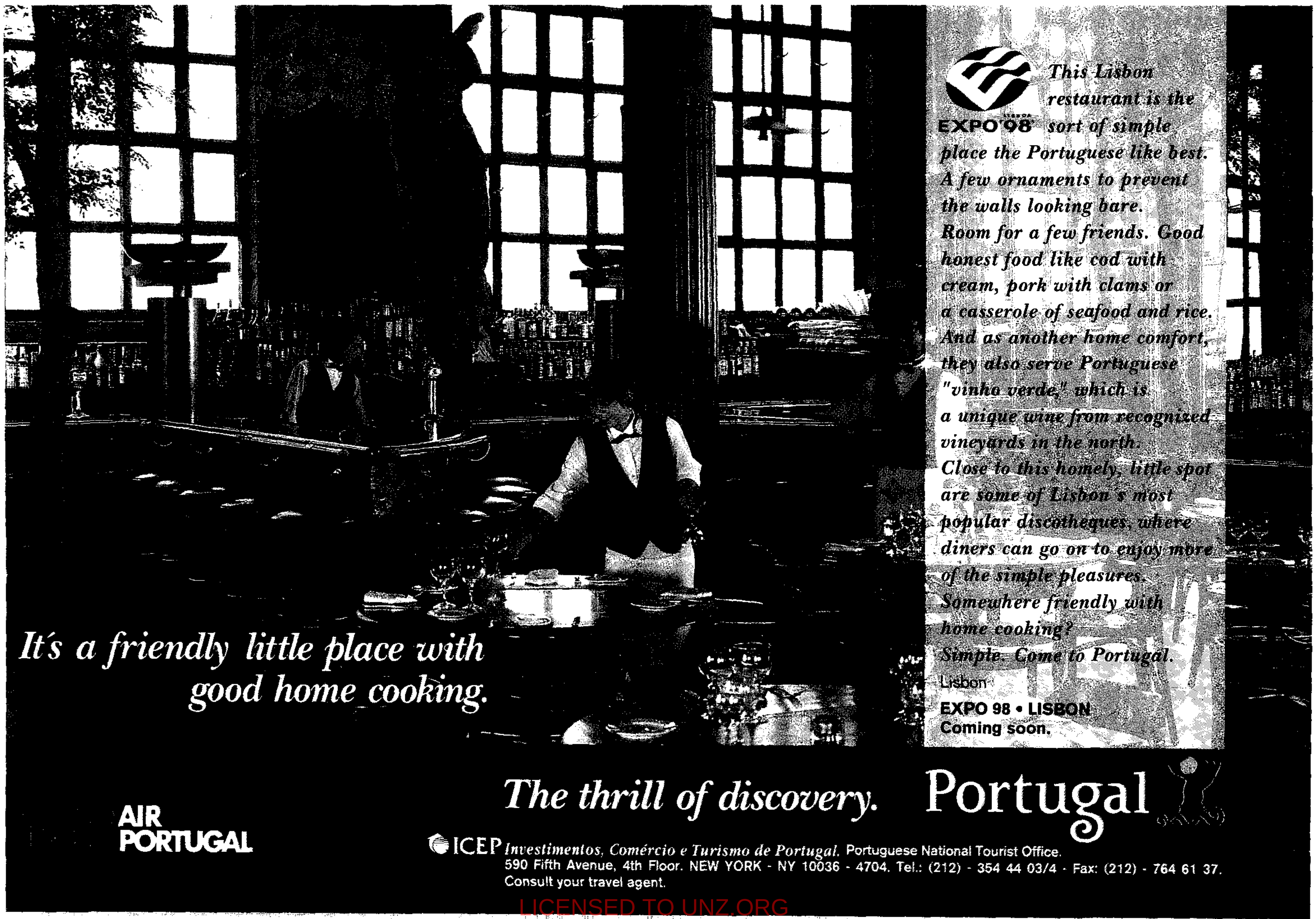
Metropolitan Opera—**DON GIOVANNI,** with Sharon Sweet, Patricia Schuman, Hei-Kyung Hong, Frank Lopardo, Thomas Hampson, and Bryn Terfel; conducted by James Levine. (Oct. 4 at 8.) . . . With Carol Vaness instead of Ms. Schuman. (Oct. 7 at 1 and Oct. 10 at 7:30.) . . . **OTELLO,** with Renée Fleming, Plácido Domingo, and James Morris; Mr. Levine. (Oct. 5 and Oct. 9 at 8.) . . . **AIDA,** with Nina Rautio, Dolora Zajick, Kristján Jóhannsson, and Timothy Noble; Christian Badea. (Oct. 6 at 8.) . . . **CARMEN,** with Denyce Graves, Barbara Frittoli, Richard Margison, and Sergei Leiferkus; John Fiore. (Oct. 7 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

New York City Opera—**CARMEN.** (Oct. 5 at 8.) . . . **DON GIOVANNI.** (Oct. 6 at 8 and Oct. 10 at 6:30.) . . . **LA TRAVIATA.** (Oct. 7 at 1:30.) . . . **LA BOHÈME.** (Oct. 7 at 8.) . . . **TOSCA.** (Oct. 8 at 1:30.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

"La Belle et la Bête"—Philip Glass's Cocteau-based film-opera, back again. (Kaye Playhouse. Oct. 4-6 at 8 and Oct. 7 at 2 and 8.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—Kurt Masur conducts Bach's Cantata No. 51 ("Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen," with soprano Harolyn Blackwell) and Grieg's incidental music to Ibsen's "Peer Gynt" (with a dramatic narration delivered by John de Lancie, as well as performances



This Lisbon restaurant is the sort of simple place the Portuguese like best. A few ornaments to prevent the walls looking bare. Room for a few friends. Good honest food like cod with cream, pork with clams or a casserole of seafood and rice. And as another home comfort, they also serve Portuguese "vinho verde," which is a unique wine from recognized vineyards in the north. Close to this homely, little spot are some of Lisbon's most popular discotheques, where diners can go on to enjoy more of the simple pleasures. Somewhere friendly with home cooking? Simple. Come to Portugal.

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by Ms. Blackwell, actress Bellina Logan, and the Westminster Symphonic Choir). (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Oct. 5-7 at 8. . . . **NOTE:** The orchestra presents a Young People's Concert on Oct. 7 at 2. . . . **NOTE, TOO:** At press time, the possibility of a musicians' strike loomed. Ticket buyers should check the status of these concerts before the performances.)

Boston Symphony—In the opening concert of Carnegie Hall's one-hundred-and-fifth season, Seiji Ozawa conducts Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 6 ("Pathétique") and Piano Concerto No. 1 (with Evgeny Kissin). (Oct. 5 at 7.)

Juilliard Symphony—Carlos Chávez's imposing *Symphony No. 2 (the rarely played "Sinfonia* India") shares the bill with Hindemith's Clarinet Concerto (featuring John Hixson) and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 6. Miguel Harth-Bedoya conducts. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Oct. 6 at 8. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 769-7406.)

Concert of Remembrance—This year's installment of the annual musical memorial for those who perished in the Second World War includes Schoenberg's "A Survivor from Warsaw" (narrated by Maurice Edwards) and Robert Starer's "Kli Zemer Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra" (with David Krakauer). Among the performers are the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra (conducted by Yaakov Bergman) and the Canticum Novum Singers (directed by Harold Rosenbaum). (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Oct. 7 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Australian Chamber Orchestra—The seventeen-member string ensemble from down, under travels up over with a pair of programs, with Richard Tognetti leading from the concertmaster's spot. Oct. 8 at 2: Presenting Tchaikovsky's Serenade for Strings and Peter Sculthorpe's "Lamento," among other works. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. For information about tickets, call 586-4680.) . . . ¶ Oct. 10 at 8: Performing a concerto grosso by Handel, a sinfonia by C. P. E. Bach, Haydn's Horn Concerto No. 1 (featuring Barry Tuckwell), Roger Smalley's "Strung Out," and Walton's Sonata for Strings. (Carnegie Hall.)

Jupiter Symphony—Jens Nygaard conducts works by two father-and-son dyads: Johann Sebastian Bach (his D-Minor Keyboard Concerto, with Seymour Lipkin) and his youngest son, Johann Christian (his Symphony in B-Flat Major); and Leopold Mozart (his Trumpet Concerto, with Richard Kelley) and his only surviving son, Wolfgang (his D-Major Divertimento, K. 251). A brief piano piece by Wolfgang's son Franz Xaver is thrown in for good measure. (Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, 155 W. 68th St. Oct. 9 at 2 and 7 and Oct. 10 at 8. For information about tickets, call 799-1259.)

RECITALS

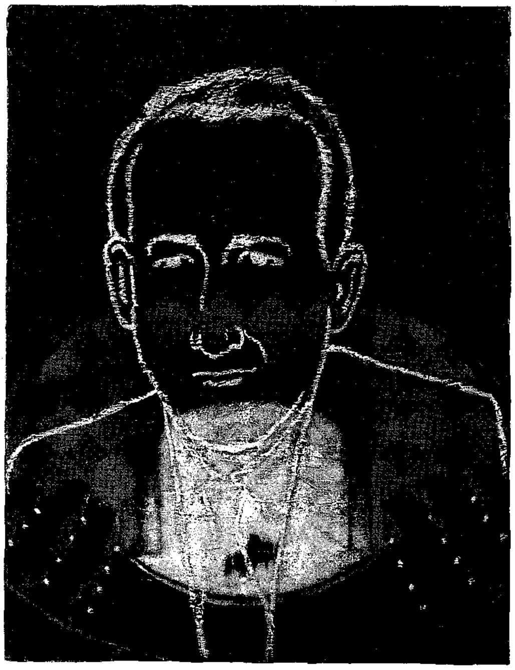
The Tell-Tale Harp?—Sopranos Lauren Flanigan and Geraldine McMillian, mezzo-soprano Laura Tucker, tenor Thomas Young, harpist Goulanara Mashourova, and the Mosaic and Modigliani String Quartets team up for a concert of works composed "under the influence of Poe" by Deborah Drattell, Augusta Read Thomas, Russell Currie, and André Caplet. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Oct. 5 at 8.)

José van Dam—The Belgian bass-baritone performs songs by Brahms, Wolf (his "Michelangelo-Gedichte"), Duparc, Ibert ("Chansons de Don Quichotte"), and Poulenc ("Chansons Gaillardes"); with pianist Maciej Pikulski. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 6 at 8.)

Moscow Conservatory Trio—Violinist Dmitri Berlinsky, cellist Suren Bagratuni, and pianist Paul Ostrovsky play piano trios by Beethoven (in C Minor, Op. 1, No. 3) and Tchaikovsky. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. Oct. 6 at 8.)

Anonymous 4—The women's vocal quartet performs music by the twelfth-century abbess Hildegard von Bingen. (St. Michael's Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. Oct. 6 at 8. For information about tickets, call 678-5432.)

Beaux Arts Trio—This year, the distinguished threesome is exploring the piano trios of the worthy Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837). A child prodigy (and apparently a favorite pupil of Mozart's, in whose home he lodged for two years), this pianist achieved real distinction in the cultural circles of his day: he succeeded Haydn as the Esterházys' musical director at Eisenstadt (though he was eventually fired for neglecting his job) and cultivated close friendships with Goethe and Beethoven. Contemporaries and later commentators liked to represent Beethoven and Hummel as rivals, but they seem to have gotten on remarkably well (though Beethoven wasn't overly fond of Hummel's pianism, reportedly superficial and "pearly"); Hummel visited Beethoven often during the master's final illness and walked alongside his bier in the funeral procession. The Beaux Arts Trio will perform four different piano trios by Hummel in its four New York programs this season (each of which will be performed twice). The opening installment offers his G-Major Trio (Op. 35, composed in 1811, in Vienna), as well as trios by Brahms (in B Major, Op. 8), and Turina (his Second). (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Oct. 6-7 at 8.)



Maurizio Pollini, at Carnegie Hall.

JAMES BURRIS

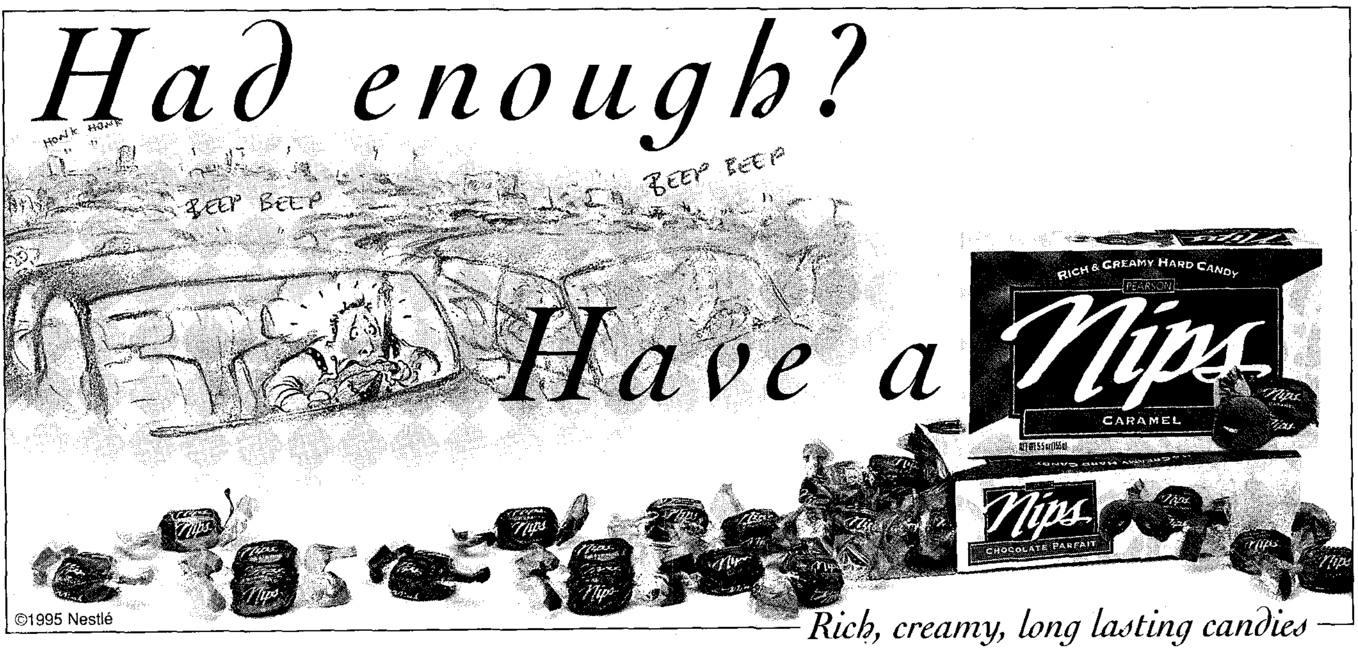
Lark String Quartet—The foursome serves music by Britten and Borodin (his Quartet No. 2) to the Sunday-morning crowd. (Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. Oct. 8 at 11 A.M. For information about tickets, call 875-5050.)

Dorian Woodwind Quintet—The ensemble, now in its twenty-seventh year, performs arrangements by Mordechai Rechtman of music by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 1-718 885-2478. Oct. 8 at noon.)

Daniel Barenboim—The pianist performs Beethoven's Sonata No. 3 (in C Major, Op. 2, No. 3), Schoenberg's Three Pieces (Op. 11), and Brahms's F-Minor Sonata. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Oct. 8 at 3.)

Maurizio Pollini—In the first installment of his seven-concert traversal of Beethoven's piano sonatas, the pianist performs the three sonatas of Opus 2 plus the E-Flat-Major Sonata (Op. 7). (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 8 at 3.)

Salon Soirées—Violinist Ariel Shamai, cellist Iris Regev, and pianist Ilan Rechtman offer



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piano trios by Mozart and Beethoven (in G Major, Op. 1, No. 2). (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. Oct. 8 at 6 and 8. No tickets necessary.)

Vera Galupe-Borszkh—The drag diva, always game for a sendup, appears in recital, without her usual accomplices from La Gran Scena Opera Company. Standard songs and arias share the bill with what Madame G.-B. describes as a "traditional African-American spiritual with a slight Russian flavor." (Kaye Playhouse. Oct. 8 at 8. The program will be repeated on Oct. 14.)

John Scott—The organist of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, performs a rededication recital at the Church of the Heavenly Rest, to celebrate the first stage of the restoration of the church's organ, which was ravaged by fire in August of 1993. His wide-ranging program includes Bach's Toccata, Adagio, and Fugue in C Major (BWV 564), Vierne's "Pièces de Fantasie, Suite III," and Dupré's "Variations sur un Noël." (Fifth Ave. at 90th St. 369-0296. Oct. 10 at 7:30.)

Manhattan String Quartet—Pianist Norman Krieger and bass-baritone Robert Osborne assist the foursome in an all-Shostakovich program that comprises the String Quartet No. 2, the G-Minor Piano Quintet, and two sets of songs. (Kaye Playhouse. Oct. 10 at 8.)

Jerome Lowenthal—The pianist performs Mozart's C-Major Fantasy and Fugue (K. 394), Jay Reise's "Rhythmic Garlands," Beethoven's C-Major Sonata (Op. 53, the "Waldstein"), Scriabin's Sonata No. 6, and the first volume ("Suisse") of Liszt's "Années de Pèlerinage." (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Oct. 10 at 8. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 769-7406.)

Tuncay Yilmaz—In his New York début recital, the Turkish violinist offers sonatas by Beethoven (the "Spring") and Janáček, as well as music by Korngold, Brahms (as arranged by Joachim), and Ahmet Adnan Saygun. Pianist Mitchell Vines assists. (Weill Recital Hall. Oct. 10 at 8.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Stadium Theology—This week Pope John Paul II, who cancelled a visit here last October for medical reasons, honors his promise to return. The Pontiff lands at Newark at 3 P.M. on Oct. 4, and addresses parishioners at Newark's Sacred Heart Cathedral (89 Ridge St., at Park Ave.) during Evening Mass at 5. On the following day at 1, he speaks to the General Assembly during a visit to the United Nations; that evening he celebrates Mass, at Giants Stadium, at 6. At 9:30 A.M. on Oct. 6, His Holiness will visit another place where a lot of prayers are said, the Aqueduct Racetrack (Rockaway Blvd. at 110th St., Ozone Park, Queens), to celebrate Mass and deliver a homily, which he will also do at the same hour the following day on the Great Lawn in Central Park. On the afternoon and evening of Oct. 7, the Pope will meet with bishops, officials of other Christian denominations, and Jewish leaders, making time for an appearance at 3:30, at St. Patrick's Cathedral (Fifth Ave. at 51st St.), where he will recite a rosary and deliver a brief address. Tickets to these events are available through local parishes throughout the diocese.

Choice Voices—In response to the Pope's visit, the New York State branch of the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League has organized a rally and march for the rights of women, on Oct. 7, beginning at 1 at Bryant Park. The march will proceed west on 42nd Street to Eighth Avenue and then turn north, to Columbus Circle. For more information, call 343-0114.

"Month of Sundays"—For the opening of its Sunday celebrations of science and world music, the American Museum of Natural History presents "Science at Work." The day of field-work and laboratory-research workshops for children includes afternoon lectures about the physics of such natural phenomena as amusement-park rides and circus acts. From 1 to 4:30, museum botanists, geologists, and archeologists will be on hand to identify items (bones, bugs, buried treasure, etc.) that visitors bring in. From 11 to 5, at a simulated dig site in front of the Hayden Planetarium, budding paleontologists can try their hand at fossil excavation; meanwhile, in the Hall of Primitive Mammals, young Leakeys can watch museum preparators treating fossils excavated during a recent Gobi Desert expedition. (Central Park W. at 79th St. For more information on the day's schedule of lectures and events, call 769-5315.)

Readings—Oct. 5 at 6:30: Poets Kathy Ebel and Todd Colby read from their work. (Biblio's, 317 Church St. Tickets at the door on the evening of the reading.) . . . ¶ Oct. 10 at 7: Columbia University and *The New Yorker* present a reading to benefit the Poetry Society of America's international exchange program. The distinguished roster of poets from Ireland and the United Kingdom includes James Fenton, Thom Gunn, Mairi MacInnes, and Paul Muldoon. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799.) . . . ¶ Oct. 10 at 8: Kazuo Ishiguro and Edna O'Brien read from their new novels. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.)

Talks—Oct. 5 at 8: Critic Helen Vendler discusses the work of Seamus Heaney. (Rosenthal Auditorium, Schermerhorn Hall, Columbia University. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Oct. 5 at 8: Writers Allen Ginsberg, Heather Lewis, Jaime Manrique, and Gary Indiana, among others, read the work of and relate gossip about such gay and lesbian literati as Walt Whitman, Jean Rhys, Manuel Puig, and William Burroughs. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. For information about tickets, call 334-1660.) . . . ¶ Oct. 6 at 7: Novelist and screenwriter Hanif Kureishi talks about his fiction. (New School. 229-5690.)

Tour—Oct. 8 at 10 A.M.: Israel Fishman of Big Knish Walking Tours wanders Borough Park as sukkahs appear in the neighborhood on the eve of the Festival of Tabernacles. For more information, call 1-718 633-2824.

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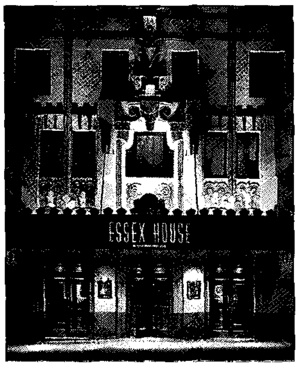

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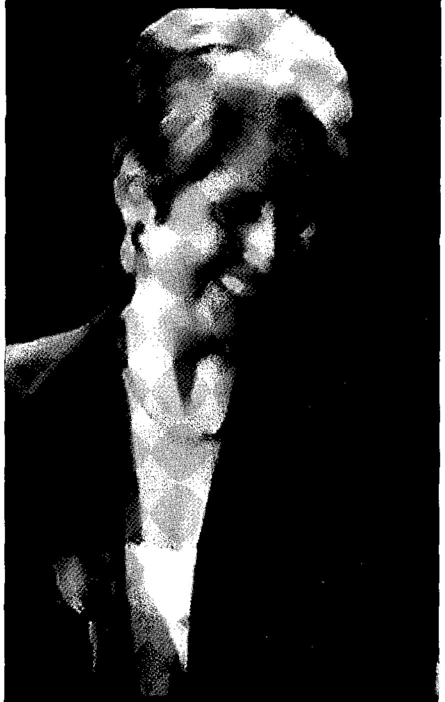

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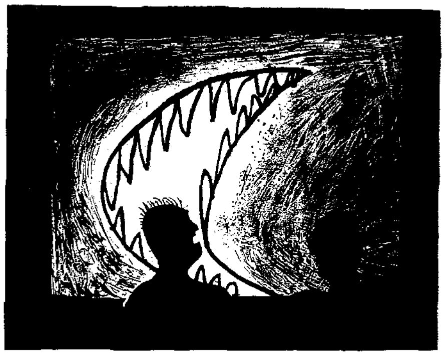

FILMS OPENING THIS WEEK

The Addiction—A movie directed by Abel Ferrara, about an N.Y.U. philosophy student (Lili Taylor) who turns into a vampire. With Christopher Walken. Written by Nicholas St. John. Opening October 4. (Angelika Film Center.)

Assassins—Sylvester Stallone, Antonio Banderas, and Julianne Moore play highly paid murderers, in a thriller directed by Richard Donner. Written by Larry and Andy Wachowski and Brian Helgeland. Opening October 6. (Gemini, Orpheum VII, Lincoln Square, and Criterion Center.)

Broken Harvest—A drama about growing up in Ireland, written by Maurice and Kate O'Callaghan and directed by the former. The Irish cast includes Colin Lane, Marian Quinn, and Niall O'Brien. Opening October 6. (Quad Cinema.)

Dead Presidents—In Albert and Allen Hughes's new picture, a Vietnam veteran (Larenz Tate) living in the South Bronx becomes involved in a scheme to rob an armored car. Opening October 4. (Sutton, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, Embassy 1, and Embassy. . . . ¶ Opening October 6, Village East Cinemas and Orpheum VII.)

How to Make an American Quilt—A ragbag of love stories, from 1860 to the present, starring Winona Ryder, Ellen Burstyn, Anne Bancroft, Kate Nelligan, and Alfre Woodard. Directed by Jocelyn Moorhouse. Written by Jane Anderson, from the 1991 novel by Whitney Otto. Opening October 6. (34th St. East, Coronet, Orpheum VII, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Metro Cinema.)

Kicking and Screaming—Reviewed below in Current Films. Opening October 6.

Kilian's Chronicle—Christopher Johnson plays a Celtic slave who escapes his Viking captors on the shores of North America, in an adventure movie written and directed by Pamela Berger. Opening October 6. (Cinema Village.)

Strange Days—Director Kathryn Bigelow's futuristic thriller, starring Ralph Fiennes, Angela Bassett, and Juliette Lewis. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) Opening October 8. (Ziegfeld.)

CURRENT FILMS

(The signed notes are by Bruce Diones, Sarah Kerr, Anthony Lane, and Terrence Rafferty. If a movie has been reviewed in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given. Theatre addresses are listed on page 28.)

The Big Green—A British schoolteacher (Olivia d'Abo) revitalizes a small Texas town by introducing her students to soccer, in a comedy written and directed by Holly Goldberg Sloan. (Village East Cinemas, Gotham Cinema, 86th Street East Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Guild, and Lincoln Square.)

The Brothers McMullen—Perhaps this old-fashioned picture about three Irish-American brothers on Long Island and their fumbled dealings with women has struck a nerve because it's one of the rare romantic comedies aimed primarily at the fantasies of straight men. The movie was written and directed by the twenty-seven-year-old Edward Burns, who also co-stars as the cynical middle brother. His character gets a lot of mileage early on out of mean-spirited locker-room humor about his fear of commitment; his conversion to true love at the end is, by comparison, perfunctory and unconvincing.—S.K. (Angelika Film Center, Murray Hill Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, 23rd St. West Sixplex, and Lincoln Square.)

Clockers—The new Spike Lee picture is adapted from the 1992 thriller by Richard Price (the two collaborated on the screenplay), but thrills are low on the agenda of this nervy, knowing tale. The clockers of the title—low-grade crack dealers who work the Brooklyn projects at all hours—belong to the only successful business in the neighborhood. Harvey Keitel plays a tired racist cop, and newcomer Mekhi Phifer a black kid suspected of murder, but neither of them is used as a star: instead Lee has built an ensemble piece to bring a small world onto the screen. Though he still can't resist a fancy visual trick from time to time, "Clockers" is, in its compound of the jaunty and the depressing, his ripest work to date.—A.L. (9/18/95) (34th Street Showplace, Manhattan Twin, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, Metro Cinema, and National Twin.)

Crumb—Terry Zwigoff's brilliant, scary documentary about the underground-comics artist R. Crumb. While the film is reviewing Crumb's career, from its psychedelic-era heyday to the present, and following him as he goes about his everyday activities, it's also telling a harrowing story about his damaged family. The movie is often funny, but what makes it extraordinary is that it explores, without presuming to explain, the sources of a unique and savage comic sensibility. And it shows us that Crumb's gift—the detachment that allows him to create such hilariously contemptuous images of the world around him (and inside him)—is also a kind of curse, or, at least, a nasty habit.—T.R. (5/1/95) (Film Forum 3.)

Devil in a Blue Dress—Denzel Washington plays Easy Rawlins, the hero of Walter Mosley's popular detective novels. The action takes place in 1948; Easy, an unemployed veteran, reluctantly agrees to help a shady-looking white man (Tom Sizemore) locate a woman who may be lying low in one of L.A.'s black neighborhoods. The movie, written and directed by Carl Franklin ("One False Move"), is the most enjoyable private-eye film in a long time: a modest, skillful, unfussy genre piece that tells an exciting story and lets its more serious concerns remain just below the surface, gently complicating the smooth-flowing rhythms of the narrative. When the picture is over, the details of the mystery fade pretty quickly, but the smoky, after-hours mood lingers. And although the film is full of sly perceptions about race relations, Franklin treats everything matter-of-factly: the ironies sneak up on us slowly, like the huge, harsh Southern California sun rising on the groggy survivors of a long sleepless night. Also with Jennifer Beals, Jernard Burks, Albert Hall, Terry Kinney, and Don Cheadle (who does a virtuoso comic turn as Easy's homicidal sidekick, Mouse).—T.R. (10/2/95) (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, Gemini, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and National Twin.)

Hackers—This movie, about a group of Internet-surfing teen-agers who hack into a computer system and become targets of a terrorist conspiracy, moves like a good episode of a hip Fox TV show. The director, Iain Softley, is a lover of fast cuts, and he has done one of the neater jobs of incorporating video techniques and effects into a film. The design is impressive, the sensational techno score adds drive to the action, and the two gorgeous leads (Jonny Lee Miller and Angelina Jolie) smolder nicely. The story is negligible, but it offers the same order of fun as a good rock video: the marriage of images and music.—B.D. (34th Street Showplace. . . . ¶ Criterion Center; through Oct. 5.)

Halloween: The Curse of Michael Myers—The latest chapter shows why he did it—maybe. Directed by Joe Chappelle. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Murray Hill Cinemas, Manhattan Twin, 86th Street East Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy.)

The Jar—A drama about life in a desert village, by the Iranian director Ebrahim Foruzesh. In Persian. (Film Forum; through Oct. 10.)

Kicking and Screaming—Noah Baumbach's first movie focusses on the indecisive, enervated months that four college buddies spend together after graduation—clinging to old habits (crossword puzzles, trivia games), living near or on campus—before they go their separate ways. What finally makes them move on, and sets this film apart from other slacker comedies, is the women they're attracted to: risk-taking students who are more capable than their men of standing on their own. Baumbach doesn't write grand speeches; he lets details and repartee carry the movie's emotional weight, and when it finally dawns on his characters that, even in postgrad limbo, life has a way of pushing you along, there's nothing self-congratulatory about the discovery. The picture has a lovely, understated autobiographical lilt. The perfect ensemble cast includes Josh Hamilton, Olivia d'Abo, Parker Posey, and the reigning king of independent-film ennui, Eric Stoltz, as the seen-it-all barkeep.—B.D. (Angelika Film Center; starting Oct. 6.)

Kids—Larry Clark's film follows some New York City teen-agers through a day and a night of largely self-destructive activity; these kids seem to be wandering in total darkness. Although the movie will undoubtedly be received as a wake-up call, a sobering report on a lost generation, what's fascinating—and unsettling—about it is Clark's unmistakable admiration for the recklessness of the young. The obsessive, ardent gaze he turns on his subjects as they stumble toward oblivion has a strangely aestheticizing effect; he can't help turning these wasted, aimless kids into icons of the beautiful and damned. Screenplay by Harmony Korine (who was nineteen when he wrote it).—T.R. (7/31/95) (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Living in Oblivion—Tom DiCillo's comedy is slight but smart, and it doesn't overstay its welcome. Steve Buscemi plays a harassed director trying to make a low-budget picture in New York, who suffers a plague of glitches that range from sour milk in the crew's coffee to an angry dwarf. It's the ideal part for Buscemi: pallid, ratty, and pop-eyed, he has the air of a man who is deeply in love with movies and wishes he weren't.—A.L. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

A Month by the Lake—A movie that captures the spontaneous magic that can happen on a special trip, when you meet people and agree to collaborate on an adventure, knowing nothing of the lives they have left behind. The setting is Lake Como in the nineteen-thirties. Vanessa Redgrave is amazing as Miss Bentley, a spinster photographer who has travelled to Italy to find love; the actress avoids all the repressed-schoolmarm clichés of the role and plays it as a loud, slightly infantile tomboy. Edward Fox is equally touching, and eccentric, as a lonely major. Trevor Bentham wrote the oddly suspenseful script, based on a novella by H. E. Bates; John Irvin directed. Also with Uma Thurman.—S.K. (Village East Cinemas, 68th St. Playhouse, and Lincoln Square.)

Moonlight and Valentino—A young widow (Elizabeth Perkins) faces the sudden loss of her husband with the help of her best friend (Whoopi Goldberg), her younger sister (Gwyneth Paltrow), her former stepmother (Kathleen Turner), and a housepainter (Jon Bon Jovi), in a comedy directed by David Anspaugh and written by Ellen Simon. (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Tower East, and Lincoln Square.)

Nadja—An eerie comedy written and directed by Michael Almereyda (and produced by David Lynch), based on the Dracula legend but updated and filmed in New York City; the splendid black-and-white cinematogra-

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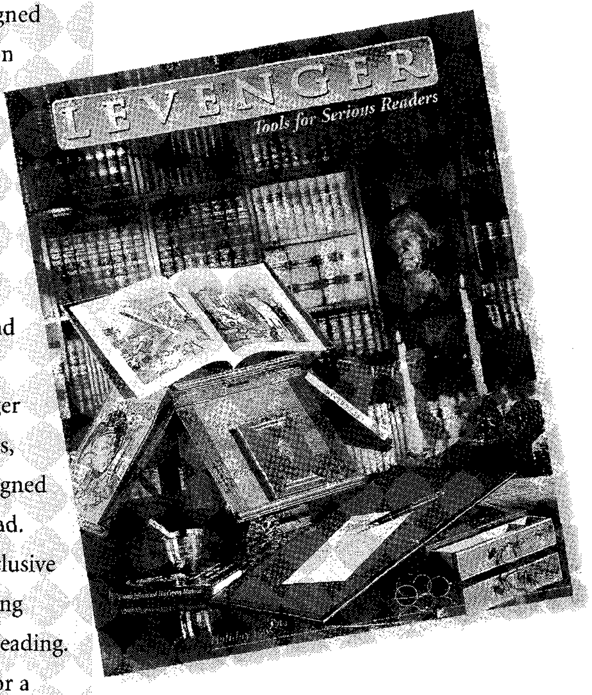

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phy, by Jim DeNault, evokes the old Universal horror pictures. The story, which begins after Dr. Van Helsing (played with goofy charm by Peter Fonda) has killed Dracula, concerns his efforts to track down the vampire's twin children. It's intended as a flippant take on the monsters that hide inside dysfunctional families, but the uneven mix of eroticism and one-liners doesn't always work, and Nadja, Dracula's daughter, though she is well played by Elina Löwensohn, comes off like some druggy East Village chick looking to score.—B.D. (Angelika Film Center.)

THE OLD LADY WHO WALKED IN THE SEA—Two aging con artists (Jeanne Moreau and Michel Serrault) in Guadeloupe teach their trade to a handsome young thief (Luc Thuillier), in a comedy of manners directed by Laurent Heynemann. In French. (Quad Cinema and Angelika 57.)

PERSUASION—The young British director Roger Michell has done what always seemed impossible. He has made a Jane Austen movie that is never pretty and only occasionally charming; instead, it is troubled, astringent, and touched with melancholy—not unlike the novel. Amanda Root, almost out-mousing Isabelle Huppert in reticence, plays Anne Elliot, who once turned down Frederick Wentworth (Ciaran Hinds, who has the profile of a Regency miniature) and has regretted it ever since. They come together again—in the country, by the sea, and on the streets of Bath—and you can guess the outcome. But Michell somehow tenses a simple narrative into suspense; the camera catches every glance between the former lovers and probes every scene for signs of hope. Anyone expecting verbal Ping-Pong and unspotted elegance will be disappointed: Anne's dress gets caught in the mud, and her sister, Mary (a fine turn from Sophie Thompson), talks through a mouthful of pie. With Corin Redgrave as Anne's monstrous father, and Fiona Shaw as the worldly wife of an admiral.—A.L. (9/25/95) (Paris.)

THE POSTMAN—Antonio Skármeta's bittersweet 1985 novel, "Burning Patience," upon which this movie is loosely based, told the story of Mario, a lonely postman who delivers mail to Pablo Neruda in Isla Negra, the desolate corner of Chile where the poet spent his final years. In Michael Radford's lovely but sanitized version, the action has been moved two decades earlier to picturesque Italy. As Neruda, the great Philippe Noiret somehow conquers being dubbed in Spanish-accented Italian; as Mario, the late Italian comedian Massimo Troisi is painfully affecting. In Italian.—S.K. (Village East Cinemas and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

THE RUN OF THE COUNTRY—A teen-ager (Matt Keeslar) in County Cavan, Ireland, runs away from his stern father (Albert Finney) and falls in love with a young woman from northern Ireland (Victoria Smurfit). Directed by Peter Yates. Adapted by Shane Connaughton from his 1991 novel. (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, Baronet, and Lincoln Square.)

SEVEN—The murders in David Fincher's serial-killer mystery are grisly tableaux, each artfully arranged to illustrate one of the seven deadly sins. This kind of self-conscious literary conceit can work if it's handled with a light, parodic touch, but the movie's clammy design and glum cinematography try to persuade us that what we're watching is a serious meditation on the nature of evil. The police detectives are Morgan Freeman, as weary old Somerset, and Brad Pitt, as brash young Mills; Freeman, with his immense dignity and authority, manages to keep his head above water, but Pitt goes under. Fincher, whose background is in commercials and music videos, doesn't seem to understand that a style that's effective for three minutes can become awfully tiresome stretched over a hundred and twenty-eight.—T.R. (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Cinema I, Cinema 3rd Avenue, Orpheum VII, Lincoln Square, and Criterion Center.)

SHOWGIRLS—An erotic thriller by Paul Verhoeven, about an ambitious lap dancer (Elizabeth

Berkley) in Las Vegas. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Olympia, and Criterion Center.)

Steal Big, Steal Little—Andy Garcia takes on two roles, as twin brothers fighting over a real-estate inheritance in Santa Barbara, in a comedy-drama directed by Andrew Davis. Also with Alan Arkin. Written by the director, Lee Blessing, Jeanne Blake, and Terry Kahn. (19th Street East 6, Beekman, Orpheum VII, Waverly, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

To Die For—Director Gus Van Sant's latest movie is his funniest, but also his least adventurous. Adapted by Buck Henry from Joyce Maynard's 1992 novel, it tells the story of Suzanne Stone (Nicole Kidman, pushy and perky), a suburban nobody who, bored with her husband (Matt Dillon), decides to become a somebody in the world of television. She joins a local station, starts to shoot a documentary about three schoolkids, and gradually lures them into her web. You expect Suzanne to ascend to great things, but the fame she craves turns out to be no less parochial than the town she despises. The film is smartly structured, and it's kicked along by a busy Danny Elfman score, but Van Sant's touch is uncertain: the story's satirical bite begins to loosen as his camera lingers more and more on the plain, disaffected teen-agers. One of them is played by Joaquin Phoenix, whose brother River was so extraordinary in "My Own Private Idaho"; it's as though Van Sant longed to recapture the wayward, carnal atmosphere of the earlier movie but found himself locked in a smaller, more brittle project. The film does for him what "The Player" did for Altman: it proves his cleverness and the sharpness of his eye without ever giving him full rein.—A.L. (Village Theatre VII, First & 62nd Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square.)

To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar—It may be a surprise to watch Patrick Swayze, Wesley Snipes, and John Leguizamo dress up in glowing silks, but it's nothing more than a surprise, and it doesn't last—the director, Beeban Kidron, has a tough time trying to mold candy floss into a dramatic shape. The bitchy threesome set off on a cross-country trip and pitch camp in a small Midwestern town, where they urge the locals to go a little wild. It's a pity that no one worked the same magic on the movie. Everything about it feels so safe, sedentary, and sexless that the leads might as well have worn gray suits.—A.L. (9/11/95) (Orpheum VII, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Olympia.... ¶ 34th St. East and Coronet; through Oct. 5.)

Opening October 4, Albert and Allen Hughes's "Dead Presidents."

AARON STONE

Unstrung Heroes—The way that the director, Diane Keaton, examines a Jewish family with an outsider's eye mirrors Woody Allen's take on Protestants: she records the messy, hyperactive lives of two crazy Jewish men with a similar exaggeration of their ethnic tendencies. The story, about a boy who goes to live with his uncles in a time of crisis (his mother is dying), is based on sportswriter Franz Lidz's 1991 memoir; the script, by Richard LaGravenese, spins sentimental cotton candy around the experience. Keaton's style is fluid and detailed, and she gets lovely performances from her actors, particularly Maury Chaykin, as the neurotic uncle who clutters his nest with old newspapers and junk, and John Turturro, as the boy's sad, down-to-earth dad. In the end, though, the film is undone by its shaky premise that crazy people are more in touch with life than their rational counterparts. It tries too hard to make lunacy endearing.—B.D. (Village East Cinemas, Cinema II, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square.)

The Usual Suspects—A treat. Five criminals, ranging from petty to pro, are herded into a police lineup on suspicion of armed robbery. They walk, but not before joining forces to plan a new crime—a bright idea that soon darkens with treachery and ends in a bulk order of dead bodies. Director Bryan Singer and screenwriter Christopher McQuarrie somehow keep from getting lost in the spiralling plot, a game in which everyone—the good, the bad, and the audience—gets to play sucker. Singer's style may overheat now and then, but his cast, headed by Chazz Palminteri and Kevin Spacey, keeps things cool.—A.L. (8/14/95) (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, New York Twin, East 85th Street, and Lincoln Square.)

ALSO PLAYING

ANGUS: Village East Cinemas.... **APOLLO 13** (reviewed in our issue of 7/10/95): Ziegfeld and Regency.... **BABE** (9/4/95): 59th Street East Cinema and 23rd St. West Triplex.... **BATMAN FOREVER** (7/10/95): Worldwide Cinemas.... **BELLE DE JOUR:** Village East Cinemas, Eastside Playhouse, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.... **BEYOND RANGOON** (8/21-28/95): Plaza.... **BRAVEHEART** (6/5/95): New York Twin and 23rd St. West Triplex.... **BURNT BY THE SUN** (5/8/95): Carnegie Hall Cinemas.... **CANADIAN BACON:** Village East Cin-

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emas and 84th Street Sixplex. . . . **CASPER:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **CLUELESS:** Movieland 8th Street Triplex and 59th Street East Cinema. . . . **DESPERADO** (9/11/95): 84th Street Sixplex and Embassy. . . . **DIE HARD WITH A VENGEANCE** (5/29/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **FREE WILLY 2: THE ADVENTURE HOME:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **THE INCREDIBLY TRUE ADVENTURE OF TWO GIRLS IN LOVE:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **JEFFREY:** Quad Cinema and Carnegie Hall Cinemas. . . . **LORD OF ILLUSIONS:** Criterion Center. . . . **MORTAL KOMBAT:** Criterion Center. . . . **MUTE WITNESS:** Village East Cinemas. . . . **NINE MONTHS** (7/24/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **THE PROPHECY:** Movieland 8th Street Triplex and Astor Plaza. . . . **SMOKE:** Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **THEREMIN—AN ELECTRONIC ODYSSEY:** Cinema Village. . . . **UNZIPPED:** Quad Cinema and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **A WALK IN THE CLOUDS:** Cinema 3. . . . **WILD REEDS** (7/31/95): Quad Cinema. . . . **WINGS OF COURAGE** (4/24/95): Lincoln Square.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

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(For show times, call 777-FILM.)

EAST SIDE

ANGELIKA FILM CENTER, 18 W. Houston St.
MOVIELAND 8TH STREET TRIPLEX, 36 E. 8th St.
VILLAGE THEATRE VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th St.
CINEMA VILLAGE, 22 E. 12th St.
VILLAGE EAST CINEMAS, 2nd Ave. at 12th St.
19TH STREET EAST 6, B'way at 19th St.
MURRAY HILL CINEMAS, 160 E. 34th St.
34TH STREET SHOWPLACE, 238 E. 34th St.
34TH ST. EAST, 241 E. 34th St.
EASTSIDE PLAYHOUSE, 3rd Ave. at 55th St.
SUTTON I AND 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th St.
GOTHAM CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 58th St.
PLAZA, 42 E. 58th St.
MANHATTAN TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 59th St.
59TH STREET EAST CINEMA, 239 E. 59th St.
BARONET AND CORONET, 3rd Ave. at 59th St.
CINEMA I, CINEMA II, AND CINEMA 3RD AVENUE, 3rd Ave. at 60th St.
FIRST & 62ND CINEMAS, 400 E. 62nd St.
GEMINI I AND 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th St.
BEEKMAN, 2nd Ave. at 66th St.
NEW YORK TWIN, 2nd Ave. at 67th St.
68TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 3rd Ave. at 68th St.
TOWER EAST, 3rd Ave. at 71st St.
EAST 85TH STREET, 1st Ave. at 85th St.
PARK & 86TH STREET CINEMAS, 125 E. 86th St.
ORPHEUM VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th St.
86TH STREET EAST TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 86th St.

WEST SIDE

FILM FORUM, 209 W. Houston St.
WAVERLY I AND 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd St.
ART GREENWICH TWIN, Greenwich Ave. at 12th St.
QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th St.
CHELSEA CINEMAS, 260 W. 23rd St.
23RD ST. WEST TRIPLEX, 333 W. 23rd St.
GUILD, 33 W. 50th St.
WORLDWIDE CINEMAS, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves.
ZIEGFELD, 141 W. 54th St.
CARNEGIE HALL CINEMAS, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th Sts.
ANGELIKA 57, 225 W. 57th St.
PARIS, 4 W. 58th St.
CINEMA 3, 2 W. 59th St.
62ND & BROADWAY, 62 W. 62nd St.
LINCOLN PLAZA CINEMAS, B'way at 63rd St.
REGENCY, B'way at 67th St.
LINCOLN SQUARE, B'way at 68th St.
84TH STREET SIXPLEX, B'way at 84th St.
METRO CINEMA I AND 2, B'way at 99th St.
OLYMPIA I AND II, B'way at 107th St.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

CRITERION CENTER, B'way at 44th St.
EMBASSY I, B'way at 46th St.
EMBASSY 2, 3, AND 4, 7th Ave. at 47th St.
ASTOR PLAZA, 44th St. at B'way.
NATIONAL TWIN, B'way at 44th St.

REVIVALS

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow. Theatre addresses and phone numbers appear with the listings following these notes.)

CLAIRE'S KNEE (1970)—The air is thick with summer and leisure in Eric Rohmer's serene story of a vacationing diplomat (Jean-Claude Brialy) who says he is interested only in women's minds and then has an "undefined desire" to stroke a young girl's knee. There's a rather enigmatic woman novelist who stands in for the director and makes ponderous remarks, but Rohmer's quiet, complacent movie-novel game is pleasing, and a captivatingly gawky teen-age actress, Béatrice Romand, who plays a subsidiary role, looks like a Pisanello princess. In French.—P.K. (Florence Gould Hall; Oct. 10.)

DISTANT VOICES, STILL LIVES (1989)—Terence Davies' autobiographical movie, set in Liverpool in the forties and early fifties, shows scenes from the life of a working-class family. In essence, it's kitchen-sink drama: Dad's a brute, Mom's a stoic sufferer, the kids rebel in pathetic, stunted ways—everybody's trapped, dead in the water. What's original, and creepy, about Davies' treatment of this familiar material is his relentless aestheticizing of it. He uses all the art-film techniques at his command to kill his family, embalm them, and rearrange their bodies in a series of lifeless, pristine tableaux. He combines the skills of an artist with the sensibility of a taxidermist.—T.R. (American Museum of the Moving Image; Oct. 7.)

THE HAUNTING (1963)—An elegantly sinister scare movie, literate and expensive (though basically a traditional ghost story), with those two fine actresses Claire Bloom (as a Greenwich Village lesbian) and Julie Harris (as the chaste heroine). This "old dark house" movie is set in a marvellous Victorian gothic pile in New England, and it's good fun. The director, Robert Wise, hadn't done a simple amusement like this since his youth; Nelson Gidding did the adaptation of the Shirley Jackson novel "The Haunting of Hill House."—P.K. (A Different Light Bookstore; Oct. 8.)

OUR HOSPITALITY (1923)—Buster Keaton plays a New Yorker who inherits a shack in the Blue Ridge Mountains and the point position in a feud. This melodramatic farce, set in 1830, has a lot of low-key cleverness and charm, but remarkably few laughs. The amazing climactic stunts on cliffs and in rapids provoke more wonder than mirth. Even in the celebrated railroad trip from the city to the South—a tricky, satirically quaint sequence—Keaton the director's pictorial and mechanical inventiveness rarely intersects with Keaton the performer's genius for slapstick-stoic characterizations. Natalie Talmadge is a tremulous Juliet to Keaton's stone-faced Romeo. Co-directed by Keaton and John Blystone; Clyde Bruckman, Jean Havez, and Joseph Mitchell share the script credit.—M.S. (Museum of Modern Art; Oct. 5.)

WE'RE NO ANGELS (1955)—Humphrey Bogart, Peter Ustinov, and Aldo Ray trying very hard to be funny as a trio of convicts who escape from Devil's Island late in the nineteenth century. They take refuge in the home of a none too bright merchant (Leo G. Carroll) and his opaque wife (Joan Bennett), and coyly busy themselves protecting the kindly dumb merchant from his mean, rich cousin and boss (Basil Rathbone). Michael Curtiz directed this oppressive, misbegotten venture, adapted from the French play "La Cuisine des Anges," from which the Broadway play "My 3 Angels" was also taken.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Oct. 7.)

YOUNG AT HEART (1954)—A remake of the 1938 "Four Daughters," with Frank Sinatra taking over the John Garfield role, the daughters reduced to three, and songs added. It isn't the monstrosity that it might have been, but in the thirties, when Garfield, a rootless product of the big city and the Depression, encounters the cozy life of a small-town middle-class family, it enrages him by making him feel how deprived he has been; in the fifties, when Sinatra, an orphan who has never found a place for himself, expresses the same kind of chip-on-the-shoulder bitterness, he seems just a sorehead and a loser. Still, the first half is watchable; Sinatra handles his cynical lines well, and there's a lot of activity around the family as you get to know the daughters—Doris Day, Dorothy Malone, and Elizabeth Fraser—and their suitors. Gig Young gives an appealingly flamboyant performance as the hotshot composer who brings Sinatra to the town to work with him. Directed by Gordon Douglas. The songs include "Someone to Watch Over Me" and "Just One of Those Things."—P.K. (American Museum of the Moving Image; Oct. 7.)

Opening October 4, Lili Taylor in "The Addiction."

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(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

New York Film Festival—The annual festival of international films—Oct. 4 at 6 and Oct. 5 at 9: "Kicking and Screaming" (†).... Oct. 4 at 9 and Oct. 5 at 6: "Lamerica" (Gianni Amelio, Italy).... Oct. 6 at 6 and Oct. 7 at 11:30 P.M.: "Flirt" (Hal Hartley, United States/Germany/Japan).... Oct. 6 at 9 and Oct. 7 at 11 A.M.: "Land and Freedom" (Ken Loach, United Kingdom/Spain).... Oct. 7 at 2: "Good Men, Good Women" (Hou Hsiao-hsien, Taiwan).... Oct. 7 at 5 and Oct. 8 at 6: "Guimba" (Cheick Oumar Sissoko, Mali/Burkina Faso/France).... Oct. 7 at 8 and Oct. 8 at 2: "Strange Days" (Kathryn Bigelow, United States).... Oct. 8 at 9: "The Convent" (Manoel de Oliveira, Portugal/France).... Oct. 9 at 6: "Fortune Smiles" (Djibril Diop Mambety, France).... Oct. 9 at 9 and Oct. 10 at 6: "The Son of Gascogne" (Pascal Aubier, France).... Oct. 10 at 9: "The Cinema of Unease" (Sam Neill, New Zealand/United Kingdom) and "Citizen Langlois" (Edgardo Cozarinsky, France). (Alice Tully Hall. For tickets, call 875-5050.)

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)—Through Oct. 5: "Queen of Outer Space" (1958, Edward Bernds).... From Oct. 6: "Mickey One" (1965, Arthur Penn).

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—A program of Buster Keaton films. Oct. 5 at 2:30: "Our Hospitality" (†).... Oct. 5 at 6: "The Navigator" (1924, Donald Crisp).... Oct. 5 at 8: "The General" (1927, Keaton).... ¶ A program of films by the director Holly Fisher. Oct. 5 at 3 and Oct. 9 at 5: "Glass Shadows" (1976), "From the Ladies" (1978), "This Is Montage" (1978), and "Soft Shoe" (1987).... Oct. 5 at 6 and Oct. 8 at 5: "Bullets for Breakfast" (1992).... Oct. 7 at 5 and Oct. 10 at 3: "Chickenstew" (1978), "Ghost Dance" (1980), and "Rushlight" (1984).... ¶ Oct. 6 at 12:30, 6, and 8 and Oct. 7-9 at 2: About a hundred 1994 British commercials.... ¶ A series of films made from Broadway plays. Oct. 6 at 2:30 and Oct. 7 at 12:45: "Two Seconds" (1932, Mervyn LeRoy).... Oct. 6 at 6: "The Amazing Dr. Clitterhouse" (1938, Anatole Litvak).... Oct. 6 at 8: "Witness for the Prosecution" (1958, Billy Wilder).... Oct. 7 at 2:30: "We're No Angels" (†).... Oct. 7 at 5 and Oct. 9 at 2:30: "Middle of the Night" (1959, Delbert Mann).... Oct. 8 at 1 and Oct. 9 at 12:45: "The Patsy" (1927, King Vidor).... Oct. 8 at 3: "The Barker" (1928, George Fitzmaurice).... Oct. 8 at 5: "The Hasty Heart" (1949, Vincent Sherman).... Oct. 9 at 5: "Charley's Aunt" (1941, Archie Mayo).... Oct. 10 at 2:30: "The Girl of the Golden West" (1930, John Francis Dillon).... Oct. 10 at 6: "Brief Moment" (1933, David Burton).

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level (875-5600)—A series of films by the Soviet director Grigori Kozintsev. All films are in Russian, with English subtitles. Oct. 4 at 2 and 7: "Don Quixote" (1957).... Oct. 4 at 4:15 and 9:10 and Oct. 5 at 2 and 8:45: "Hamlet" (1965).... Oct. 5 at 6: "King Lear" (1970).... ¶ The Fourth Annual New York Video Festival. Oct. 6 and 9 at 7: Digital interactive-media programs.... Oct. 7 at 2 and Oct. 8 at 7: "At Sundance" (1995, Michael Almereyda and Amy Hobby).... Oct. 7 at 7:15 and Oct. 8 at 9:15: "Stairs 1 Geneva" (1994, Peter Greenaway).... Oct. 7 at 9:30, Oct. 8 at 2, and Oct. 9 at 4: "Cremaster 4" (1995, Matthew Barney) and "Cremaster 1" (1995, Barney).... Oct. 7 at 4:15: "Jane: An Abortion Service" (1995, Kate Kirtz and Nell Lundy), "Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man" (1995, Alix Umen), and "Obsessive Becoming" (1995, Daniel Reeves).... Oct. 8 at 4: "Raza" (1993, Adolfo Davila), short films by Kip Fulbeck, and "A.K.A. Don Bonus" (1995, Sokly Don Bonus Ny and Spencer Nakasako).... Oct. 10 at 4: "Watching TV Watching Us" (1995, Cara Mertes) and "Remote Control" (1995, Mertes).... Oct. 10 at 6:15: "The Imagined, the Longed For, the Conquered and the Sublime" (1995, Roddy Bogawa), "Deserts" (1994, Bill Viola), "Lovely Desert" (1995, G. M. Auletta), and "Buried in Light" (1995, Jem Cohen).... Oct. 10 at 9: Music videos by Mark Romanek, who will be present.

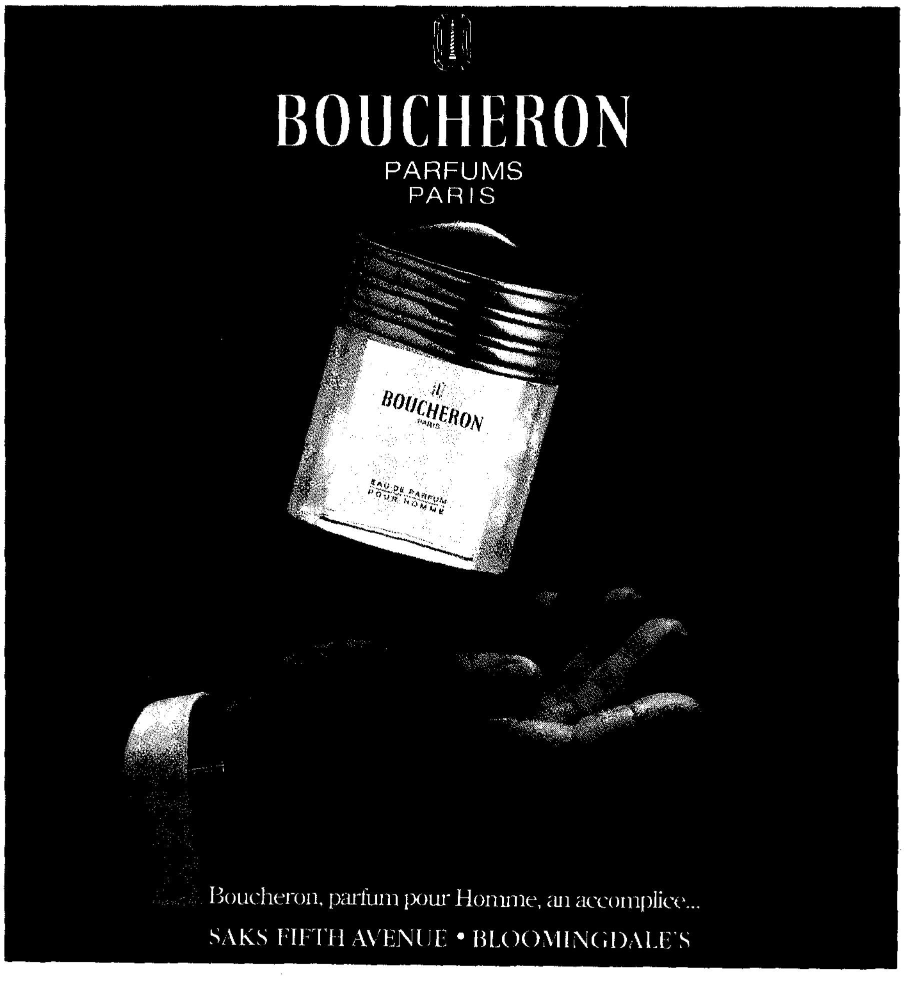
American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (1-718 784-0077)—Films by Terence Davies. Oct. 7 at 2: "Children" (1976), "Madonna and Child" (1980), and "Death and Transfiguration" (1983).... Oct. 7 at 4:15: "Distant Voices, Still Lives" (†).... Oct. 8 at 2: "The Long Day Closes" (1992).... Oct. 8 at 4:30: "The Neon Bible" (1995).... ¶ Oct. 7 at 6: "Young at Heart" (†).

A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850)—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On Oct. 8 at 7, the feature will be "The Haunting" (†).

Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5181)—Oct. 5 at 9: "Hiroshima, Mon Amour" (1959, Alain Resnais; in French).... Oct. 6 at 8: "Hollywood Outtakes and Rare Footage" (1983) and "Made in USA" (1966, Jean-Luc Godard).... Oct. 7 at 8: "The Quiet One" (1948, Sidney Meyers) and "Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors" (1964, Sergei Paradjanov; in Ukrainian).... Oct. 8 at 8: "Diamonds of the Night" (1964, Jan Nemec) and "A King in New York" (1957, Charlie Chaplin).

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—Oct. 10 at 12:30 and 6: "Claire's Knee" (†).... Oct. 10 at 3:15 and 8:45: "La Collectionneuse" (1966, Eric Rohmer; in French).

Symphony Space, B'way at 95th St. (864-5400)—Oct. 10 at 7: "The Passenger" (1963, Andrzej Munk; in English and Polish).... Oct. 10 at 8:15: "The Promised Land" (1974, Andrzej Wajda; in Polish).

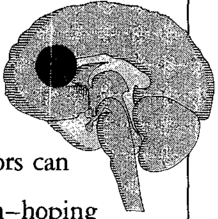


BOUCHERON
PARFUMS
PARIS
BOUCHERON
PARIS
EAU DE PARFUM
POUR HOMME
Boucheron, parfum pour Homme, an accomplice...
SAKS FIFTH AVENUE • BLOOMINGDALE'S

ONCE A STROKE OCCURS, THE DAMAGE IS DONE. DOES IT HAVE TO BE?

New medicines currently being tested may be able to stop destruction of brain cells in the crucial hours after a stroke.

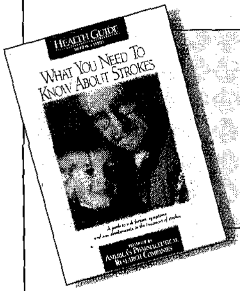
Scientists from pharmaceutical research companies discover more than 9 out of 10 new drugs.



When a person suffers a stroke, reduced blood flow damages part of the brain. Then a powerful chain of chemical reactions occurs. Called the *glutamate cascade*, it rains terrible destruction down on brain cells in the initial days after a stroke, causing further damage. As glutamate levels build, excess calcium and a toxic form of oxygen destroy brain cells. Today, doctors can only stand by and watch–hoping that the cascade will end before massive damage occurs. But there is hope. Pharmaceutical company researchers are currently developing 19 new drugs that could help reduce the terrible damage to the brain that occurs after a stroke.

prevention

Anyone can have a stroke. But age, gender, race and medical history play a role. Some people also experience the following warning signs: temporary weakness or numbness on one side of the body, blurry or dim vision in one eye, a sudden, severe headache, or speech difficulty. Seek immediate medical help if you have any of these symptoms. Fortunately, there are things that you can do to reduce your risk of a stroke: Quit smoking • Exercise regularly • Maintain a low cholesterol diet • Limit alcohol.



HEALTH GUIDE

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT STROKES

For a free copy of "What You Need To Know About Strokes," please call us toll-free: 1-800-862-5110 or visit us on the Internet: http://www.phrma.org

America's Pharmaceutical Research Companies

THE
NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

THE BIOGRAPHER AND THE GENERAL

Stephen Ambrose, the military historian and biographer of Dwight Eisenhower, barks orders like a general, though he was never a soldier. While walking on a mountain path near his home, in Helena, Montana, he spies his dog, Mamie (after Ike's wife), picking up a dead bird. "Damn it, Mamie, put that down," he growls. With his tanned, deeply lined face, his gravelly voice, and his tough-guy manner, Ambrose looks and sounds like a retired football coach, a job Ike likened to being a general.

The fifty-nine-year-old Ambrose recently took early retirement from the University of New Orleans, where he was a professor and the head of its Eisenhower Center. He has written twenty-four books, including the recent "D-Day" and a three-volume biography of Richard Nixon. (Ambrose, who was teaching at Kansas State when Nixon spoke there in 1969, was pressured to leave after he and his wife heckled the President with cries of "Napalm!")

Ambrose's books fall between the popular work of journalistic historians and the denser style of academics. Although he has described dozens of military and political campaigns, he had never planned one until now. About a year ago, Ambrose began plotting to draft Colin Powell for President, joining the venerable P.R. man Tex McCrary (who helped launch the Draft Ike movement in 1951) as a principal in Citizens for Colin Powell.

"I've been studying the Army for four decades," Ambrose says. He first heard of Powell in the late seventies, as one of a group of officers trying to revive the military after the low point of Vietnam. Then, in 1992, Ambrose received a fan letter from the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff telling him—"in simple, straightforward English sentences," Ambrose snaps—how much he admired the author's book "Band of Brothers," the story of a Second World War élite parachute unit. That began a correspondence between the two men, which has quickened in the past six months. Every week, Ambrose writes Powell a letter—"never more than a page"—emphasizing why he should run. "I say what Bill Robinson, of the *Herald Tribune*, said to Ike in 1952: Wouldn't you like to be in a position to direct your country's future, rather than just comment on it?"

Ambrose is well aware that such decisions are not made alone. "I've tried to reassure Powell's wife," he says. "I tell her, 'You married a great man, and he won't be fulfilled unless he has a great role to play.' Tex got Barbara Bush to talk with her. I know Alma's concerned. But, hell, she's a soldier's wife—she's had to live with risk for thirty-three years."

Ambrose's role as the General's aide-de-camp is unofficial and unasked for. "I told him I wouldn't stop until he told me no. And he hasn't told me no," Ambrose says. Back at his house, he pulls out a folder of letters from the General. In a note from earlier this year, handwritten in painstaking block letters, Powell recounts that he kept a quotation from Ike—about the need for officers to stay close to their men—on the back of his desk nameplate for twenty-five years.

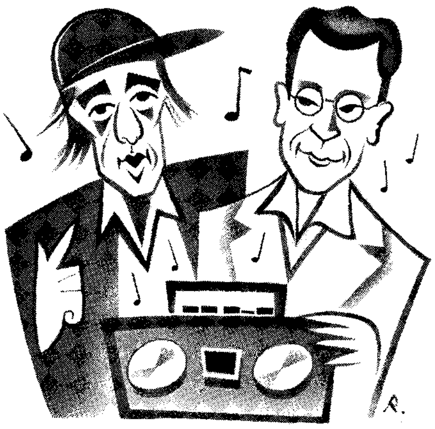
Ambrose insists that Powell is Ike's equal. "Though compared to D-Day, Desert Storm was a field maneuver," he says, he nonetheless believes that Powell's involvement in Vietnam, Haiti, Somalia, Iraq, and the Pentagon have prepared him for the Presidency in the same way that the Second World War prepared Ike for the job of Commander-in-Chief. "People are saying that the Powell Doctrine is too timid," Ambrose says. "Hell, the Powell Doctrine is really the Ike Doctrine. Ike said, 'Never send a battalion to take a hill if you've got a division.' "

From his back porch, Ambrose gestures at the meadows stretching toward the mountains to the north. "The Buffalo soldiers were stationed right over there at the end of the last century," he says. Formed in 1866, the 9th and 10th Cavalry, which became known as the Buffalo soldiers (the Indians' name for them), were among the Army's few black regiments. They were victims of the Army's racism, however, and were treated as cannon fodder. Powell spent many years raising money to create a memorial for them at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

Ambrose has no doubt about what Colin Powell will do. "He owes them. He'll run. I'll bet my house on it," he says, and adds, as if he were stating the obvious, "He's a soldier in the U.S. Army. He'll do his duty."

AUTEUR! AUTEUR!

The other Friday afternoon, Al Pacino, the fifty-five-year-old superstar with the burning, deep-set eyes, was starting his first key meeting with the com-

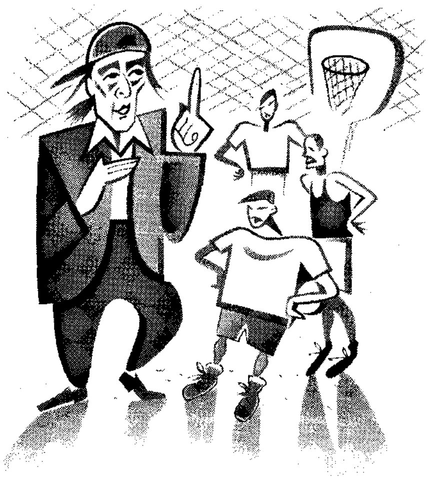


Al Pacino and Howard Shore

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROBERT RISKO

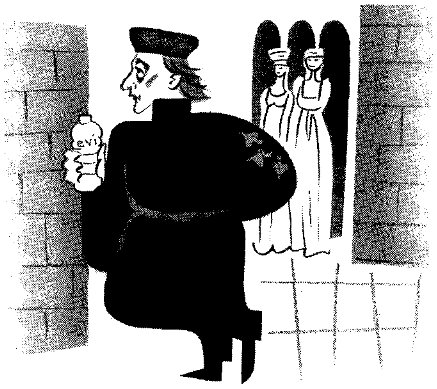
poser Howard Shore, whom he had just engaged to do the score for his new movie, tentatively titled "Looking for Richard." Pacino had paid the film's entire cost, just as he did with his first production, the fifty-two-minute, still unreleased film he made seven years ago, "The Local Stigmatic," for which Shore had also composed the score. Pacino's new film is a unique combination of filmed scenes from Shakespeare's "Richard III" interspersed with documentary material about the way actors and directors, along with various people on the street, feel about Shakespeare, Richard III, Acting, and Life. With Pacino producing, directing, and playing the leading roles (Richard III and Al Pacino), eighty hours of film were shot over a three-year period and have now been edited down to two hours.

PACINO had enlisted a mind-boggling cast of big names both for the filmed play scenes and for the documentary. For the first, he had, among others, Kevin Spacey as Buckingham, Alec Baldwin as Clarence, Harris Yulin as King Edward, Estelle Parsons as Queen Margaret, Winona Ryder as Lady Anne, and Aidan Quinn as Richmond. For the second, in addition to random construction workers, truck drivers, tourists, etc., he had Kenneth Branagh, Kevin Kline, James Earl Jones, Rosemary Harris, Peter Brook, F. Murray Abraham, Derek Jacobi, John Gielgud, Vanessa Redgrave, and Emrys Jones and Barbara Everett, a couple of Oxford scholars.



Pacino, wearing an oversized, multicolored ski parka over black shirt and pants, met Shore in the production company's high-floor New York office-cum-apartment: glaringly bright picture windows, comfortable sofas, tubular-steel office chairs with dark-blue cushions, a large television set, numerous pictures of Pacino's dark-eyed six-year-old daughter, lots of books—"A World History of Photographs," "Les Théâtres de Paris," John Gielgud and John Miller's "Acting Shakespeare." For Shore, a slender, mild-speaking, attentive man several years younger than Pacino, this would be the fortieth movie he'd composed music for. Pacino, practically dancing with enthusiasm and contained energy, popped a cassette into the video monitor. He seemed to merge immediately into what appeared of the movie's start on the screen: the camera panning down over lofty tree branches and cathedral-like spires, and a voice-over proclaiming in elegant English-actor accents:

Our revels now are ended. These our actors
(As I foretold you) were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air.



Next, the screen revealed Pacino in closeup, unshaven, mustached, his long black hair under a black baseball cap turned backward, and the rest of him in black except for an orange print scarf. "Who's gonna say 'Action' around here? Am I gonna say it?" he asks onscreen. There are mumbles of "*You* say it," "No, *you* say it" around him. "*You* say it," Pacino says to whoever is behind the camera.

PACINO is shown in a Manhattan playground, running around under a basketball hoop playing ball with a city kid. He interviews an electrician on the street who tells him Shakespeare's people talk too much and too fast, and are boring besides. Pacino brings up the subject of Shakespeare's feelings in his plays to a panhandler, who says, unhappily, "If we think words are things, and we have no feelings in our words, then we say things to each other that don't mean anything. But if we felt what we said, we would say less and mean more."

In his office, Pacino, holding a small bottle of water, took a stance in front of Shore. "It's always been my dream to communicate how I feel about Shakespeare," Pacino said. "How we *feel.*"

"I know," Shore said sweetly.

"Even though we're actors, this will have the feeling of an experiment," Pacino said. "We're doing Shakespeare in a traditional way. But we want it to be relevant to us today. It's our quest."

Shore made some notes and smiled. "We'll get the quest feeling by using Elizabethan-style music for the documentary part," he said.

"What's it called—contrapuntally?" Pacino asked.

"Contrapuntally," Shore repeated approvingly.

Pacino, sipping his water, suddenly pointed to the TV screen. "Here," he said. "Now. This is the first time you see that." The image was of Pacino, as Richard III, in a long black cloak, horribly bent over, laboring to drag his crippled self down a long flight of steps.

Onscreen, as Richard, Pacino says:

Now is the winter of our discontent
Made glorious summer by this son of York. . . .

As Pacino continues crookedly making his way down, he goes on:

But I, that am not shap'd for sportive tricks,
Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass . . .
Deform'd, unfinish'd, sent before my time
Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,
And that so lamely and unfashionable
That dogs bark at me as I halt by them. . . .
And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover
To entertain these fair well-spoken days,
I am determined to prove a villain
And hate the idle pleasures of these days.
Plots have I laid . . .

"Ha!" Pacino said to Shore. "He says what he's thinking. He's announcing right away what he plans to do—to set his brother Clarence and the King 'in deadly hate the one against the other.' I need help here, Howard. Something to give a hint of what's to come."

Shore gave a conspiratorial smile. "Here we're in the *play,*" he said confidently. "The music will come out of the play."

The screen image again switches to the documentary. The Shakespearean director Peter Brook is saying that the key word should be "discontent."

"This is a way of letting the audience know what we go through," Pacino said. "It makes them privy to what's going on on a deeper level."

Onscreen, Clarence, Richard's brother, is expressing his love and fidelity to Richard. But Richard is saying:

> Simple plain Clarence, I do love thee so
> That I will shortly send thy soul to heaven.

"That family!" Pacino said. "They're clawing at each other for the throne. How about this old Queen?" On the screen, old Queen Margaret is cursing Richard as "the troubler of the poor world's peace," calling him an "elvish-mark'd, abortive, rooting hog," and a "loathed issue of thy father's loins."

"That's mystical, spooky," Shore said. He gave a theatrical shudder.

"She really, really scares me," Pacino said. He moved up close to the screen. "Here. The scene is 'The Wooing of Lady Anne.'" Onscreen, he is saying, "I'll have her. . . . Ha!" He pauses for three beats, then says, "But I will not keep her long!"

He looked maniacally satisfied, onscreen and off.

"That will be like a sex dance," Shore said.

"Ha!" Pacino said, and he took another sip of water.

TOKENISMS

SOMETHING terrible has happened in the subways, and it has to do with those new turnstiles they're installing. Unlike the responsive, older turnstiles, the new devices require you to pause just after depositing your token and before proceeding through the metal tripod. For an awkward, self-conscious moment, the machine gives you the once-over, like a night-club bouncer, before granting passage. Those who don't heed the pause are in for a pelvis-crushing encounter with the turnstile's stainless-steel arms. It hurts, and, because such collisions cause the entire bank of turnstiles to undulate mockingly, it's embarrassing, too.

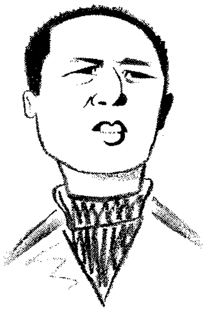
New York City Transit acknowledges the pause but doesn't want to discuss it publicly for fear of aiding fare-beaters. To the designers of the new turnstiles, however, a California technology firm called the Cubic Corporation, the pause seems a source of pride. Ron Kane,

THE CHINA SYNDROME

ONE of the most perplexing aspects of the Chinese government is the way its officials keep snatching defeat from the jaws of victory. Who can forget how they made a mockery of themselves by "disappearing" the dissident Wei Jingsheng, how they jeopardized support in the foreign business community by their cavalier behavior toward Hong Kong, and then transformed potential good will from the Beijing Non-Governmental Organizations Forum on Women into an international embarrassment. Some attribute the gaffes to ineptitude, others to the perverse but deeply rooted tradition of self-loathing that grew out of China's history of being vanquished by the West. Whatever propels this self-defeating tendency, China does not seem destined to escape it soon. Just last week, in fact, the government engaged in yet another round of shooting-itself-in-the-foot right here in New York.

When the plane that was supposed to bring the Chinese director Zhang Yimou to the New York Film Festival for the première of his "Shanghai Triad" arrived at Kennedy Airport without him, he became the third director in the Festival's history to miss his film's première on opening night. The last was Rainer Werner Fassbinder, but there was one big difference: Fassbinder had died several months before "Veronika Voss" opened the Festival in 1982.

As is so often the case in China, Party officials did not need to physically block Zhang from leaving home. All that was needed was to convey their displeasure: If you wish to continue making films in China, it would be imprudent to go to New York. Chinese artists have rarely been able to withstand such pressure. As the great essayist Lu Xun wrote in 1925, "Our forefathers, however dumb, managed after a few thousand years of reflection to elaborate a subtle recipe to control people: crush all those whom you can crush; as for others, put them on a pedestal. By putting them on a pedestal, you can also control them—you merely need to whisper constantly in their ears, 'Do as I tell you, otherwise I shall bring you down.'"



Zhang Yimou

Zhang is a veteran of many Party manipulations. He was warned away from attending the Oscars in 1991, when his film "Ju Dou" won a nomination, and from the Cannes Film Festival, when his "To Live" was screened last year. It's not that Zhang's films attack the Party but that their subtlety makes censors wonder if he's up to something they don't understand. What exercised officials this time, however, was not Zhang's film itself—a sumptuous but not overtly political evocation of Shanghai's nineteen-thirties underworld—but the fact that a documentary about the 1989 Beijing massacre called "The Gate of Heavenly Peace" (directed by Carma Hinton and Richard Gordon, with me as a producer) was also on the Festival lineup. Party watchdogs ordered a cultural attaché at their New York consulate to complain to Richard Peña, the chairman of the Festival's selection committee, and ask that the film be withdrawn. Peña politely refused.

What makes this incident such a tragedy is that "Shanghai Triad" is a world-class film by a gifted director whose presence at the Festival might have been an occasion for unalloyed Chinese pride. Instead, the Chinese government has turned the event into another galling humiliation.

The Chinese government profoundly distrusts its own people, especially its artists, who invariably become more difficult to control as soon as they get abroad. As Lu Xun wrote, "Once upon a time, there was a country whose rulers succeeded in completely crushing the people, and yet they still believed the people to be their most dangerous enemy."

—ORVILLE SCHELL

Cubic's New York spokesman, explains that the pause uses technology similar to that found in the sophisticated weapons systems his company has created for the Defense Department. "If you watched the Gulf War and you saw the crosshairs on TV before the boom—well, we made those. Crosshairs are our kind of stuff." Referring to a turnstile, he adds, "The kind of stuff they used to down bombers—it's all in there."

The new turnstiles cost ten thousand dollars a pop, and a good portion of that goes into creating the pause, which is essentially a verification process. Here's what happens in the moments after you put your token into the bezel (that's turnstile lingo). It first passes through an optical sensor, then rolls down a ramp, past another optical sensor. A computer notes the amount of time that journey takes, and from that calculates and checks the circumference of the token. Next, the token passes a magnetic sensor, which tests its metallic content. If the token passes those tests, it drops into a black box about the size of a deck of cards, called the "comparitor." In every comparitor, there is an honest-to-goodness token, which is measured against the still-unverified object. If the comparitor token matches the object, the object is "banked," energizing a solenoid switch that unlocks a "barrier device," allowing a one-third rotation of the tripod and the passage of one commuter. The M.T.A. has proposed a fare increase of up to twenty-five cents beginning the first week of November, and, to prevent commuters from hoarding the present, cheaper tokens, might put new ones into circulation. If the plan goes through, the turnstiles must be individually recalibrated, and all two thousand one hundred comparitor tokens replaced.

The turnstile is certainly technologically advanced, but, like many defense-industry marvels, this contraption is doomed to almost immediate obsolescence: the transit authority plans to replace tokens with MetroCards by 1997. "Getting rid of metallic tokens," Kane says, "is the ultimate stated goal."

HOME MOVIE

Awake at once
No space between
The day and dream
Seen as it runs
Me off the screen
No time to splice
Slices of life—
I'm wide awake,
No second take.

—SAMUEL MENASHE

FINAL INNINGS

BASEBALL-TEAM "appreciations" have become a standard late-season P.R. ritual, designed to bring out a few hundred extra fans on the final weekend home date, but the ceremonies out at the sunstruck Oakland Coliseum a week ago Sunday were something else. The appreciation was not for the fans or the team but for its owners, the Walter Haas family, who for the past fifteen years have been the flip side of George Steinbrenner: a shining model of altruistic, self-effacing, and successful sports-franchise ownership. Now the A's have been sold to a couple of businessmen, Steve Schott and Ken Hofmann, and although the team will stay put, the crowd of thirty thousand, one hundred twelve fans seemed to know that they were probably saying goodbye to a tenor of baseball enjoyment that had been set by Walter A. Haas, Jr., himself, the shy and smiling Levi Strauss proprietor, who bought the club in 1981 as a means of doing something positive for the economy and the spirits of the city. Haas, who had been in declining health for months, was not present, but his son, Walter J. Haas, who is the team's chairman and chief executive officer, was forgiven some tears when the club's gift to its owner was announced: every man and woman in the Athletics' front office (well over a hundred); the manager, Tony La Russa, and his seven coaches; and all thirty-two players on the roster had pledged fifteen hours of service apiece to the Oakland community.

THE A's won a World Series and three league pennants during Haas's stewardship, but with him, pleasure in the day always outranked winning, and this game (against the Minnesota Twins) had the atmosphere of a company picnic. The players sat on folding chairs in the infield, with their wives beside them and their younger children on their laps. The stands were also crowded with families and kids, and there were plenty of large baseball caps resting on small, sunburned ears, and ponytails poking out the backs. The Athletics' home-uniform cap has a yellow bill, and the youngsters in the lower stands, seen from the upper deck, looked like flocks of ducklings waving enormous baseball gloves at each nearby foul ball. In the bleachers and outer stands, there were a dozen-odd hand-lettered signs thanking the Haas family: "THANKS FOR HAASPITALITY," "HAASTA-LA-VISTA," "HAAS #1," and the like.

The Oakland Athletics have retired only two players' numbers (as against the Yankees' overbearing thirteen), and when the newest yellow jersey was unveiled on the right-field wall, across from Catfish Hunter's No. 27 and Rollie Fingers's No. 34 in left, there was no number on it at all. But the name "Haas" spelled out across the back in green letters brought the crowd to its feet in a spontaneous roar. The players stood and cheered, too—and in an instant, it seemed, everyone was up again and yelling, this time for Mark McGwire's four-hundred-and-sixty-five-foot home run in the second inning, *way* back into the left-field bleachers: a shining meteor sent up, everyone knew, for Walter Haas. Three days later, he died. ◆

"The Biographer and the General," Richard Stengel; "Auteur! Auteur!," Lillian Ross; "Tokenisms," Warren St. John; "Final Innings," Sally Small.

Why you should pay $349 for this radio.

Obviously, it better not be just another radio. This one isn't. Quite simply, the Bose® Wave® radio gives you sound that's richer, more natural, more lifelike than you've ever heard from a radio. Many people think it actually sounds more like a stereo system. It's no exaggeration to say you have to hear it to believe it.

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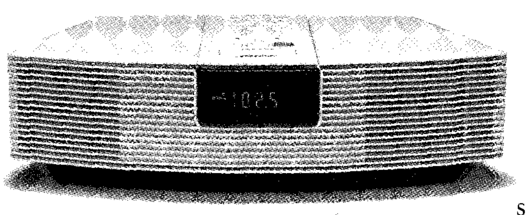

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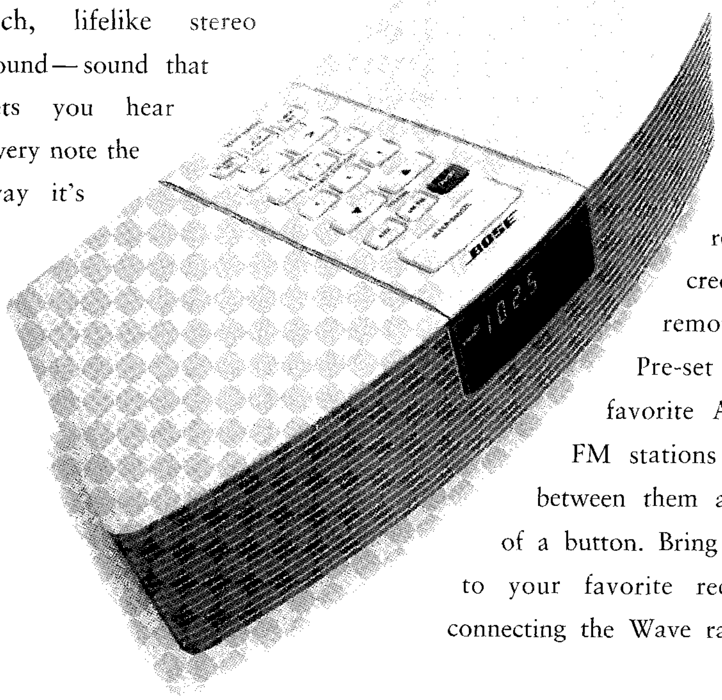

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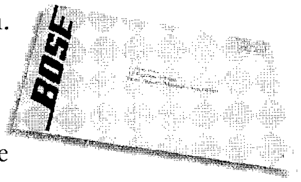

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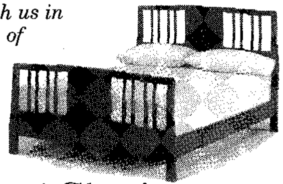

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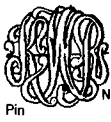

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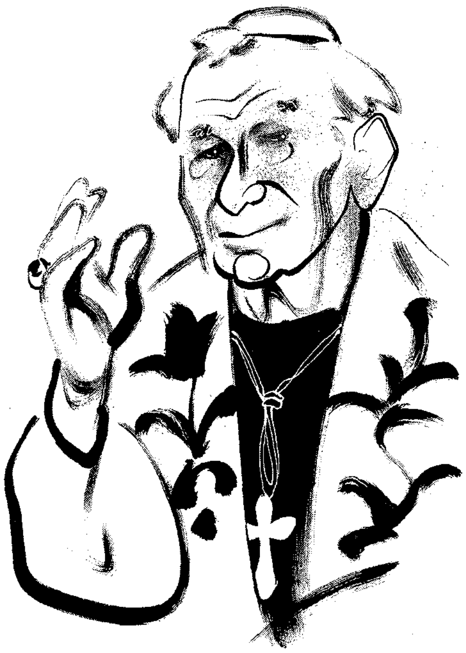
Why are American Catholics so drawn to the Pope who may be the last obstacle to the reforms that they want?

BY COLM TÓIBÍN



Pope John Paul II: Projecting both sympathy and inflexibility.

PAUL HAMLYN

SOMEWHERE now, surely, among the College of Cardinals, the stately old men of the Roman Catholic Church, there is a Gorbachev in the shadows slouching toward Rome to be born. You watch their stony faces, note their dignified bearing and the richness of their robes, and you think that there must be one among them, cunning and secretive, who is planning a quiet revolution in the Catholic Church. It could happen overnight: suddenly, without warning, the Berlin Wall of clerical celibacy could be destroyed; the bans on contraception, on women priests, and on divorced people who have remarried receiving the Eucharist could be overturned. The Catholic obsession with the forbidden fruit of sex could fade away.

Those who want change in the Church are waiting for John Paul II to die, because it is clear that there will be no change, and no discussion about change, during the rest of his pontificate. Yet as he grows weaker the light in his eyes seems to strengthen, and his performances become more powerful and fascinating. I watched the magic in Ireland in 1979, in Rome in 1986, in Poland in 1991, and in Rome again in 1994: his presence lifting the crowd out of itself—his voice, his hunched shoulders, his bulky frame, the set of his stubborn jaw against the softness of his eyes. It is not simply the aura of his office that draws people to him but the mixture of his steely strength and his deep humanity. Also, he was once an actor, and knows about the theatre. In Czestochowa, Poland, in 1991, at the shrine of the Black Madonna, he said Mass for a million young people. He seemed to emphasize his own frailty as he walked up the steps to the altar. When he came to the first platform, he stopped, as though he could go no farther. And then he turned and looked at the vast crowd with a gaze in which bemusement was mixed with power. He was dressed all in white. He did not wave or make any gesture. The television lights were on him, and his face was alert to all the tricks of light. He turned again and walked up to the altar, wandering from side to side, as though in deep reverie and contemplation. The crowd held its breath. The young people cheered him; they were ready to do anything he said. Later, he sat with his hands covering his face, as though the burden of his office were too much for him. And later still, when a young girl from the Sudan who had been reading some of the prayers during the ceremony tried to run toward him and was held back by security guards, he gestured to them to let her go, and she came to him and wrapped her arms around him. The crowd was spellbound. On his travels, he projects

Catholicism at its most sympathetic as well as its most inflexible.

In these moments, you can grasp why Catholicism still holds such sway in the Third World and in the United States, where the number of Catholics is expected to increase to seventy-four million in 2005, as compared with forty-six million in 1966. This man's authority is serious, absorbing, all-embracing, just as the rituals of his Church—the moment of transubstantiation, for instance, when the bread and wine become the body and blood of Jesus Christ, or the moment of forgiveness in the confessional—are powerful and unambiguous.

In a recent *Newsday* poll of New Yorkers, fifty-six per cent of Catholics said that they were very happy with the Church, thirty per cent were moderately happy, and only twelve per cent were unhappy. Thomas C. Fox, in his book "Sexuality and Catholicism," summarizes the views of the American Catholic sociologist and novelist Father Andrew Greeley, which are that "Catholics like being Catholic. They especially like the 'sacramentality' of the church," and "the imaginative outlook that views creatures as metaphors for God, as hints of what God is like." Another interesting finding of Greeley's is that sixty-eight per cent of America's Catholics, as opposed to fifty-six per cent of non-Catholics, have sex at least once a week and are consistently more sexually active than all others.

Dissent from papal teaching and general dissatisfaction within the Catholic Church, then, center on issues of sex and gender rather than on those of ritual or sacrament. Fox's book is a definitive account of the tensions that have existed between American Catholics and the Vatican since the Second Vatican Council opened, in 1962. He explores the major areas of disagreement—birth control, abortion, homosexuality, clerical celibacy, women's status in the Church, and carnal love—offering analyses of the Church's positions and a report on mainstream American dissent. Some of these tensions appear to be based on a fundamental misunderstanding: at times, the Pope seems to be the only person who understands that he is under no obligation to listen to anyone; the faithful, however, including members of the Catholic hierarchy, seem increasingly frustrated that their voices are not heard.

In October of 1979, a year after his election, John Paul II was briefly addressed, in Washington, D.C., by Sister Theresa Kane, who was then the president of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious: "As women we have heard the powerful message of our Church addressing the dignity and reverence for all persons. As women we have pondered these words. Our contemplation leads us to state that the Church in its struggle to be faithful to its call for reverence and dignity for all persons must respond by providing the possibility of women as persons being included in all ministries of the Church." The Pope, however, made it clear that he would not soften on the issue of women's ordination, and in 1993 he went further, stating that he was speaking "definitively," and insisting, according to Fox, "that Catholics must stop discussing the issue."

But part of John Paul II's appeal is that he offers conciliation as well as condemnation, soft talk in the same breath as old-fashioned, authoritarian rhetoric. His recent letter to women, dated June 29, 1995, admits, "Women's dignity has often been unacknowledged and their prerogatives misrepresented; they have often been relegated to the margins of society and even reduced to servitude. . . . And if objective blame, especially in particular historical contexts, has belonged to not just a few members of the Church, for this I am truly sorry." The language of the letter is inclusive; at times, the Pope seems awestruck by women, full of respect for their public and private roles. There are moments in "Crossing the Threshold of Hope," a book of interviews with the Pope, in which he seems to display a practical knowledge of the world that women inhabit. In a section about abortion he says (characteristically emphasizing his points in italics), "Often *the woman is the victim of male selfishness*. . . . precisely when the woman most needs the man's support, he proves to be a cynical egotist, capable of exploiting her affection or weakness, yet stubbornly resistant to any sense of responsibility for his own action. . . . The only honest stance, in these cases, *is that of radical solidarity with the woman*." Yet in Catholic schools in Ireland, for example, a girl who becomes pregnant is often ex-

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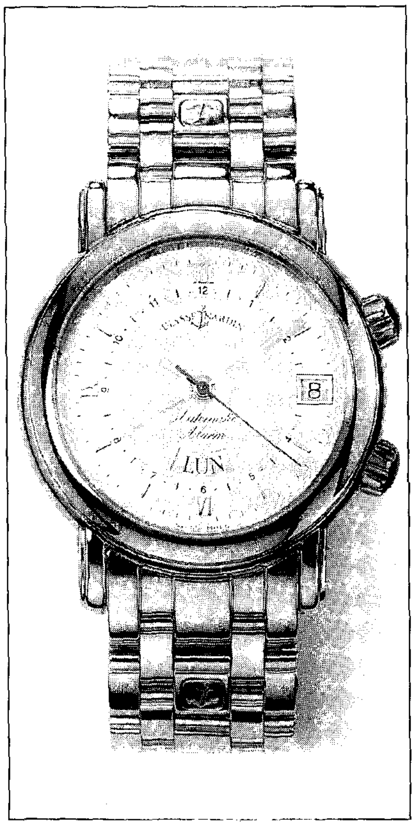

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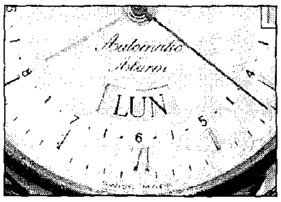

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"Something's happened, Doug. I've lost touch with the Warren Buffett in me."

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pelled from school; the boy is never expelled.

Jackie Hawkins, the executive editor of the Catholic journal *The Way*, was not impressed by the Pope's letter to women. "The approach is one of effusive flattery," she wrote. "Nothing has changed. We are still simply human props of various designs." It seems now that the issue of women in the Church will never be sorted out until Rome yields on the matter of women priests. Fox states the matter decisively in his book: "Approaching the outer edge of the beginning of the twenty-first century, an exclusively male Catholic priesthood is the most painful, most intractable, most divisive, and potentially most damaging issue facing the church."

THE dual response that we have come to associate with the pontificate of John Paul II—on the one hand, forbidding debate, and, on the other hand, seeming sympathetic and open—has its reflection in the generally ambiguous response of Catholics to Church teaching. During the nineteen-seventies, Andrew Greeley reported that the papal encyclical "Humanae Vitae"—issued by Pope Paul VI in 1968—which reaffirmed the ban on the use of artificial contraception, resulted in a dramatic decline in Church credibility and in Catholic contributions. One of Greeley's American studies noted that shortly before "Humanae Vitae" was issued sixty-seven per cent of responding priests, who would normally have insisted on a strict interpretation of Church rules, said they would not refuse confessional absolution to laypeople practicing birth control; five years after "Humanae Vitae," that number had increased to eighty-seven per cent.

Catholics also have a dual response to the Pope's authority. Most Catholics know that the doctrine of papal infallibility was established by Rome itself in the late nineteenth century. Even Catholics who revere the Pope know that they are not bound by his every statement. In fact, it is generally accepted among Catholics that the Church is capable of changing its position on contraception, on clerical celibacy, and on women priests, but not on abortion or divorce or transubstantiation.

In Pope John Paul II's statements and his writings—such as "The Gospel of Life: The Encyclical Letter on Abortion, Euthanasia, and the Death Penalty in Today's World" or "Crossing the Threshold of Hope"—both abortion and artificial birth control are seen as aspects of the same darkness: the "culture of death" in the modern world. Reason does not interest John Paul II; reason is merely another aspect of the filthy modern tide. The arguments made against the blanket ban on abortion are presented with great lucidity in Fox's book. But they miss the point of John Paul's argument, which is that he is not open to argument. In "Crossing the Threshold of Hope" he quotes St. Paul: "Proclaim the word; be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient. . . . For the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine." And he adds, "Unfortunately, don't these words of the apostle seem to characterize the situation today?"

The Pope makes it clear in "The Gospel of Life" that he is not especially impressed by democracy. "Democracy cannot be idolized to the point of making it a substitute for morality or a panacea for immorality," he writes. "Fundamentally, democracy is a 'system' and as such is a means and not an end. Its 'moral' value is not automatic, but depends on conformity to the moral law to which it, like every other form of human behaviour, must be subject." And it is the Pope who, as the head of the Church, determines the moral law for Catholics. In an age of opinion polls and pressure groups, the Church stands apart, viewing its own authority as absolute. For many educated Catholics—especially those in Austria and the United States—the Pope's refusal to listen to his flock is becoming increasingly infuriating.

IN arguments about the future of the Church, the subject of John Paul II's Polishness comes up again and again. It is the first thing that dissenting Catholics point to when they attempt to come to terms with the stubbornness

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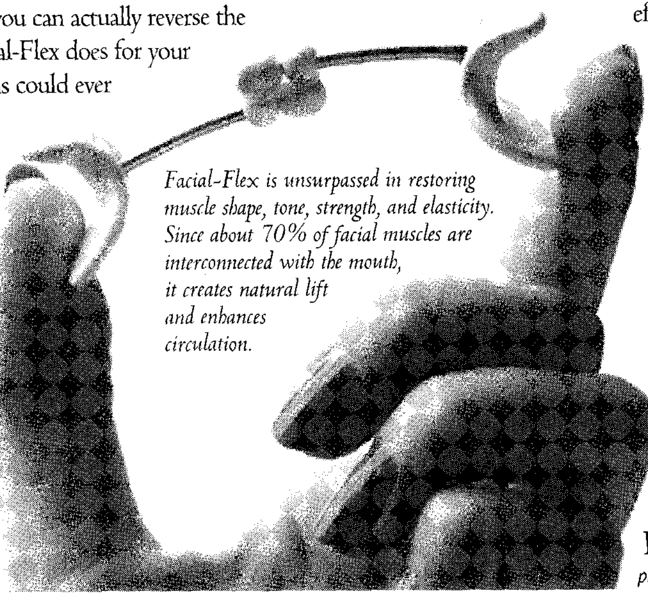

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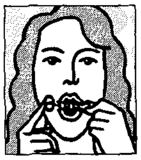

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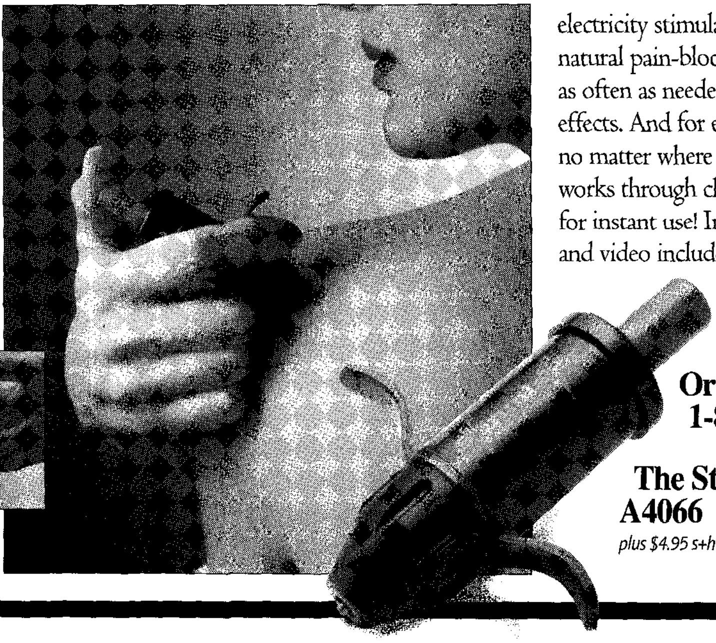

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and inflexibility of the Vatican. Somehow, people feel, if he were German or Italian or from the Third World he would understand the need for change. But the Polish mind-set, Catholics who want change will tell you, has known only blinkered authority. Poland did not experience the Reformation or the Enlightenment, and is not fully European or modern—this, the dissenters say, explains why the Polish Pope's devotion to the Virgin Mary is so emphatic, and why he will not tolerate discussion, and why, on his journeys, he demands people's love and respect but will not accept their questioning.

Karol Wojtyla was born in 1920 in Wadowice, a town in southern Poland. His father was a patriotic retired Army officer. His only brother, Edmund, was born in 1906; a sister died in infancy; his mother died when he was eight. Karol was brought up by his father, in a household without any women but in which his mother's memory was deeply revered. His brother, who was away at medical school while Karol was growing up, died suddenly of scarlet fever in 1932, and in 1941 his father also died suddenly, of a heart attack. Thus, by the age of twenty-one, in a Poland occupied by the Nazis, Karol Wojtyla had lost all his family.

Most Catholic priests become clerical students at the age of seventeen or eighteen, immerse themselves during their formative years in the rituals, teachings, and politics of the Church to the exclusion of all else, and are looked after materially and financially by the Church and their families throughout their lives. Karol Wojtyla's experience was different. In 1940, in order to avoid forced labor, he began working in a quarry near Kraków. In his spare time, he was involved with a theatre group in the city, and he wrote poems and plays. In 1942, he decided to study for the priesthood, and joined a secret seminary—the Church was under severe pressure from the Nazis, and many members of the clergy died in concentration camps—in the archdiocese of Kraków, but continued to work as a laborer until close to the end of the war. His work during the war, Tad Szulc writes in the most useful biography that has yet appeared in English on the Pontiff's background, "taught him how to suffer in silence and dignity, and instilled in him a habit of absolute discipline, which, as pope, he seeks to impose on an increasingly rebellious church."

Szulc's biography is mostly uncritical of John Paul II in all phases of his life. The author is emphatic about the lack of anti-Semitism in Wojtyla's background, and this view is supported by considerable evidence in speeches and statements made by the Pope. In 1991, when the Pope visited Wadowice, which is close to Auschwitz, I heard him speak about the Jewish presence and heritage in the town and the tragedy of its disappearance. He has been careful over the years, as Szulc points out, to refer to the Holocaust as the destruction of people whom he viewed as part of his own community, and to distance himself from general Polish anti-Semitism. (In 1936, the Catholic Primate of Poland wrote in a pastoral letter, "There will be the Jewish problem as long as the Jews remain. . . . It is a fact that the Jews are fighting against the Catholic church, persisting in free thinking, and are the vanguard of godlessness, Bolshevism, and subversion.")

It is easy to understand John Paul II's stubbornness and his single-mindedness in light of the deaths in his family and the terrors of the Nazi occupation of Poland, but there is another matter to consider in any attempt to understand the nature of his papacy. After the Second World War, with the virtual disappearance of the Jewish population, and the Soviet annexation of the western Ukraine, Poland became almost exclusively Catholic. Wojtyla, Szulc writes, "is also identified with the messianic concept of Polish Catholicism, the national idea and religion being inseparable." Poland sees its own martyrdom as an aspect or a symbol of Jesus's martyrdom. Thus the events of Polish history are viewed as part of a struggle between God and Satan. At Easter, 1990, six months after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, many Catholic churches in Poland placed the national symbol, the crowned eagle, at the center of the altar, as though Easter that year should preëminently commemorate the resurrection of Poland from the dead. In the minds of many Poles, the Polish nation and Catholicism are merely aspects of each other. It would be difficult for anyone who became a main player within this system to accept that religion is a private matter or that the individual conscience should become a governing factor in Catholicism or that the Pope should respond to public opinion and relax rules.

In "Sexuality and Catholicism" Fox writes, "It is difficult to overemphasize how important holding the line against artificial birth control has been for Pope John Paul II. During one trip to South Africa, for example, he condemned birth control forty times in ten days of public speeches." Some of this obsession can be explained by his book "Love and Responsibility," which is based on a course of lectures he delivered at the Catholic University of Lublin in 1957-58, and which became a best-seller in Poland and was translated into several European languages. He goes into great detail about the "sexual urges" (the phrase is his) of men and women and the responsibilities arising from these urges. There is an odd innocence about his tone; homosexuality, for example, with *its* attendant urges, is mentioned only in passing and stamped as a deviation. He writes as though sex and marriage went hand in hand—as they did, perhaps, in Poland in the nineteen-fifties, where both Communist and Catholic puritanism kept young people out of harm's way. A stroll around Warsaw or Kraków on a Saturday night, even in the early nineties—the silence in the streets, the sense that everyone was at home, living quietly, timidly obeying the rules—explains something of John Paul II's views on sex.

How did he become Pope, then, having come from such a backwater, isolated from the real world by the Iron Curtain? It must be remembered that the Second Vatican Council gave Church intellectuals like Wojtyla an opportunity to shine in Rome; and since Cardinal Wyszynski, Wojtyla's immediate superior, was not especially interested in the matters raised by the

Council, Wojtyla became the effective head of the Polish Church at the Council, and made many friends and contacts. In 1967, when he was forty-seven, he was made a cardinal by Paul VI, though at that time there was already one Polish cardinal, and thus no urgent need to appoint a second. "Clearly, Paul VI regarded him as a favorite," Szulc writes. Between 1973 and 1975, he had eleven personal audiences with Paul VI. According to Szulc, "He had attained the highest levels of the Holy See in terms of personal influence, prestige, and access all the way to the top, and his network of friends reached deep into the Curia." In February of 1976, he was asked to conduct the Roman Curia's Lenten Retreat in the presence of the Pope.

From the late sixties on, Karol Wojtyla travelled widely throughout Europe, the United States, Canada, and Australia. Almost everyone who dealt with him at that time attests to his energy—he loved skiing and climbing as he had once loved football—and to his humor, charisma, strength, organizational skills, his popularity with young people, and his ability to speak many foreign languages. He was also known, of course, for his diplomacy in dealing with Polish authorities and his concern for the future of the Church. It is clear from Szulc's book, and from a biography of John Paul II written by Michael Walsh and published in Britain in 1994, that the cardinals in the conclave that met in the Sistine Chapel in 1978 to elect a successor to John Paul I were deeply divided between two Italian candidates—one viewed as a liberal, the other as a conservative. Karol Wojtyla was not an outsider or an unknown quantity or a dark horse but someone who had worked his way to the very center of power in the Church and who came from one of the most Catholic countries in the world. He managed to represent to his colleagues both the sense of hope and renewal that resulted from Vatican II and an older, unreformed, almost medieval Catholicism.

What distinguishes the Pope's pontificate is the power of his spirituality, which, despite everything, still manages to inspire Catholics all over the world, and his belief in authority. His "Prayers and Devotions: 365 Daily Meditations" and "Crossing the Threshold of Hope" amply reflect these two aspects of his vision. The latter book takes the form of John Paul II's replies to a series of written questions posed by an Italian journalist, Vittorio Messori. It is hard to think of many people in the world who would tolerate the tone of naked obsequiousness in the questions that Messori puts to the Pope. The replies, too, contain their fair share of cliché and banality. They are delivered in full solemnity, lacking the humor and fire of his public appearances.

IN 1990, the American bishops wrote in a statement after their national conference, "The Word of God proclaimed to all nations is by nature inclusive, that is, addressed to all peoples, men and women. Consequently, every effort should be made to render the language of biblical translation as inclusive as a faithful translation of the texts permits." The catechism was thereupon translated into what Fox calls "modestly inclusive language," only to be delayed for two years until the Vatican had the text rewritten, using exclusive terms. (God "calls man to seek him, to know him, to love him with all his strength.") A new translation of the Bible, approved by the American bishops, has been suppressed by Rome for similar reasons.

Nothing is being left to chance. The Pope and those closest to him are determined to push back the tide of equality and modernity. And this is happening without any lessening of the Pope's popularity; the crowds still turn out to see him. In a way, his intractability adds to his appeal: the hard man with the soft voice, who is still fascinated by the world, speaking with divine authority and without any interest in current thinking or pressure groups, prepared to watch but refusing to listen, treating the whole world as though it were Poland in the nineteen-fifties, and insisting on the force of tradition and time-honored mystery. ♦

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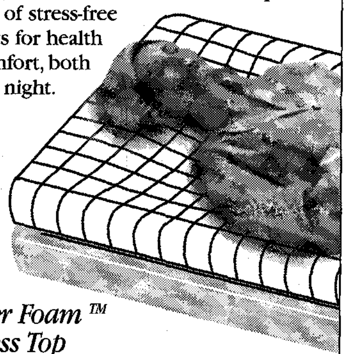

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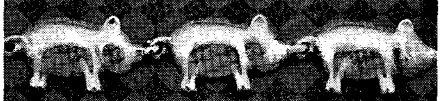

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THE ART WORLD

TRUE GRID

The quest that led Piet Mondrian to his two-dimensional colored blocks and sharp black lines is documented in a moving show at MOMA.

BY SIMON SCHAMA

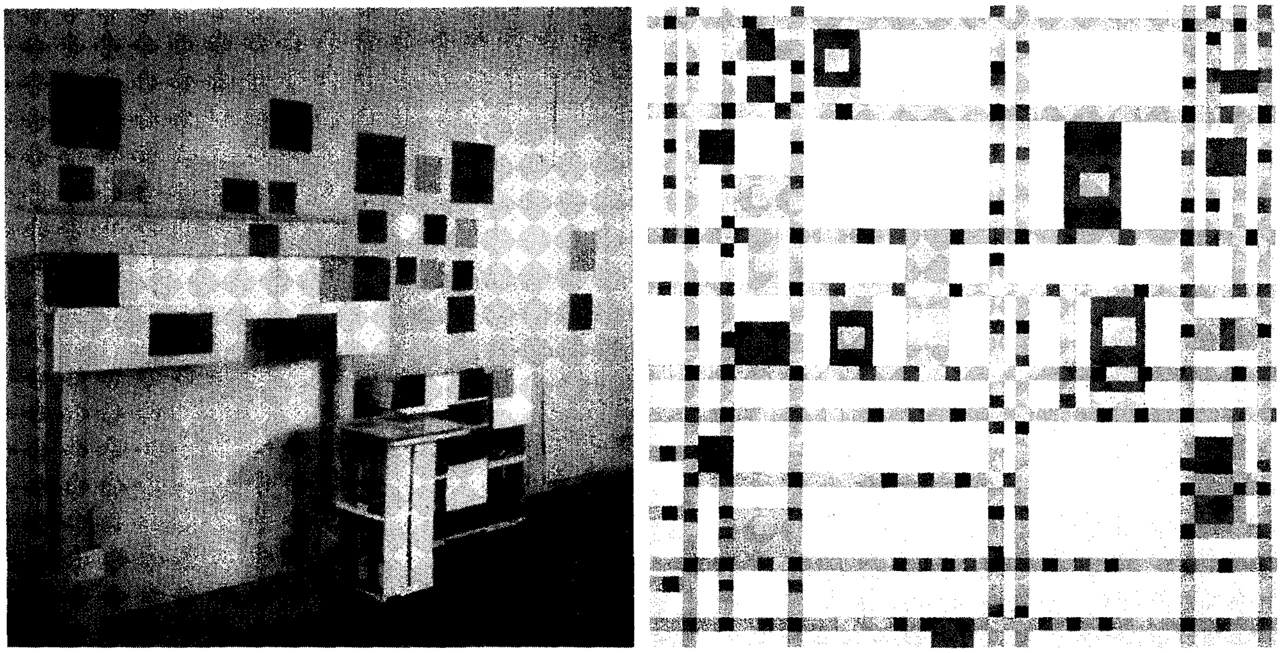
IN the foreground of a crowded Pieter Brueghel masterpiece, the opposed forces of Carnival and Lent battle for the souls of believers. Carnival, the fat sausage warrior, sits astride a wine cask, brandishing a skewered pig. His foe, mirthless Lent, erect in a straight-backed chair, carries in one hand birch twigs to scourge earthly pleasure and in the other a paddle-load of fish. To the Dutch, he was, and is, *Pekelharing* (pickled herring), sharp and puritanical. His spare face and frame give him a startling resemblance to Piet Mondrian.

In 1893, the twenty-one-year-old Mondrian exhibited a still-life of herring and cut lemons. Its monochrome grays and browns bear the imprint of the Dutch academic tradition in which he had been trained. One of his first paintings had been a *vanitas*, a visual sermon; done to order for his Calvinist schoolteacher father, it depicted the stock emblems of mortality—scythe, hourglass, crown—and was inscribed "Thy Word Is Truth." Much of Mondrian's subsequent career was devoted to a dialogue between the earthly and the spiritual. But the artistic record of that investigation is anything but sombre. After the stunning show that arrived this week at the Museum of Modern Art (it has previously been seen at the National Gallery, in Washington, and the Gemeentemuseum, in The Hague), Mondrian should no longer be thought of as the ascetic *Pekelharing* of modernism, dogmatic in conception and formulaic in execution. The story this exhibition tells is one not of captivity to dogma but of liberation from it; not of the "ruled precision of the geometer" that was Clement Greenberg's term for Mondrian's art but of restless experiment.

For those who might be anticipating three hours with Mondrian as the museum equivalent of the grapefruit diet, the news from West Fifty-third Street is shockingly good. "Piet Mondrian: 1872–1944" is an illumination, and it offers an experience as exhilarating as and more profoundly moving than many of MOMA's line-around-the-block spectaculars. In Washington, the public, sensing an enigma, was wary. The reception at MOMA should be different, if New Yorkers have eyes to see. It was here, after all, that Alfred Barr first celebrated Mondrian's rightful place in the history of modernism by including nine Mondrian paintings in his great 1936 survey, "Cubism and Abstract Art." And it was here that Mondrian spent the last years of his resolute life, producing work that flashed with color and rhythm—the final refutation of critics who had pronounced him trapped within an aesthetic cell.

The view that Mondrian was abstraction's seminarian, all headwork and no handwork, has been convenient for the kind of high-minded criticism that writes off talk of "art objects" as so much museum preciosity. The two-dimensional compositions of primary-color planes and black lines for which Mondrian is best remembered have seemed ready-made for knockoffs, and the reproduction of a generic "Mondrian effect" has been as widespread in industrial design and architecture as it has been in art. (His red rectangles and black grids became Hollywood shorthand for the computer age in the opening shot of the 1957 Tracy-Hepburn comedy "Desk Set.") But this show reveals Mondrian as, at the core, one of the least mechanical of the heroic modernists. Despite his reputation, he believed that painting was the supreme visual art, free of any obligation to function.

Paint mattered to Mondrian. To go through this exhibition is to keep company with an artist who was almost exclusively paint-happy. He was obsessed with paint's untranslatable peculiarity—its viscosity or liquidity, its opaqueness or transparency—and, above all, with the radiance of its pigment. Like many



One of the great closing acts of modern art: Mondrian's New York studio, and his "Broadway Boogie Woogie" (1942–43).

LEFT: © HARRY HOLTZMAN, COURTESY MONDRIAN ESTATE/HOLTZMAN TRUST; RIGHT: THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

other Dutch painters, he became restive with the grim palette that even the self-consciously modern painters of the eighteen-eighties and nineties confused with tonal integrity. But Mondrian was no precocious rebel. His first years as an artist in Amsterdam were spent making copies in the Rijksmuseum; studiously painting conventional portraits, still-lifes, and landscapes; and failing (twice) to win the Prix de Rome. The verdict, according to his examiners, was "Application: good—Talent: fair." In his late twenties, still very much the earnest and respectable novice, he began to do odd, crepuscular, off-center landscapes, many of them near the river Gein, where churches and trees dissolve into cloudy backlight or watery reflection.

In his mid-thirties, having labored through a program of cautious Impressionism, Mondrian suddenly began plastering his depictions of Zeeland dunes and Holland riverbanks with color combinations of aggressive unsuitability. Many of these concoctions, which he began turning out around 1908, are melodramatically beautiful. An engulfing dune, pulled up against the picture plane, is flecked with cobalt and turquoise. Its base and crest, though, are picked out in brutal tangerine. An avenue of riverside trees near Oele traps a creamy, high-fat-content moon within smeared and dripped bands of green and crimson. A stolid windmill is set alight in shrieking scarlet and gold. Obviously, Mondrian had seen van Gogh. But, just as obviously, he was no Expressionist. Keying raw color to psychic states was less compelling to him than experimenting with the sensory effects produced by this or that improbable chromatic juxtaposition. Nor was he interested for any length of time in breaking color down to the basic optical constituents decreed by Pointillist theory. For Mondrian, even in these first forays, color was not a scientific tool but a meditative pathway, whether it was laid on thickly, in custardy tints, or carefully modulated, in pink and gray halftones.

Almost nothing of this subtle play of color can be discerned in printed reproductions, as even the best efforts of the exhibition catalogue make painfully clear. Something else that becomes evident at first hand is Mondrian's compulsive labor with the brush, and his need to expose the process of his painting. Erasures, pentimenti, and all the sudden tugs of intuition and regret are allowed full visibility, enlisting the beholder in the arduous work of completion. At no stage of his career was Mondrian complacently glossy in his finish. In "The Sea" (1912), a tour de force of self-conscious painterly display, the rhythm of the waves is partly abstracted into overlapping fish-scale forms, which are defined with dashing black curves and are folded into the marine gray-green of the scowling North Sea. As if he were moving with the tide, Mondrian mimetically performed the motion of the waves by applying the color, wet on wet, in little undulations that snake over the entire surface of the painting.

THE curators responsible for the exhibition—Angelica Zander Rudenstine, Joop Joosten, Hans Janssen, Yve-Alain Bois, and MOMA's John Elderfield—would probably not be happy if visitors were to while away the hours in the galleries devoted to Mondrian's early work, which include both the chromatic explorations of the years after 1908 and the virtuoso Cubist compositions of his first stay in Paris, from 1912 to 1914. Bois, in particular, urges a brisk march toward the heart of the matter—the arrangements of color planes and lines that Mondrian called his Neo-Plastic abstractions.

He began to paint them in Paris in 1919, not long after leaving the Netherlands permanently. For the curators, this is the only Mondrian that really counts—the Mondrian who decisively altered modern art, wiping it clean of the vestigial remains of representation that lingered on in Cubism and Surrealism. The artist's aim was to "interiorize" external appearances, to extract the essence of things from the husk of appearance. Such essence, by definition, would have no resemblance whatever to the material casing of our external world. It could appear only after our vain craving for verisimilitude was suppressed. Once freed from the obligations of representation, "abstract reality" could make itself felt and seen, could be revealed in the dynamic oppositions between plane and line, primary color and white or black, horizontal and vertical. Mondrian came to see himself as the liberator of paint from its servitude to the concrete world. In his hands, painting became prophetic and universal. It is this Mondrian who, in the view of Rudenstine and her colleagues, demands our utmost attention, not the loud pseudo-Fauve or the Cézanne-worshipping Cubist. And, they argue, it is this Mondrian who, if he is given proper breadth of display, can be freed from the clichés about the one-note virtuoso, boxed into angular obsessions.

It would be churlish to find fault with this approach. From the outset of his career, Mondrian habitually worked in series, and the curators present coherent groups of the abstract paintings with unprecedented completeness. Comparisons within a series and between separate series indeed reveal dramatic changes that result from what seem superficially like slight recalibrations of basic design. Inside Mondrian's Neo-Plastic world, though, a decision to halt a vertical black line a matter of millimetres above a bottom edge, or to transect a blue color plane with a horizontal line, or to banish a primary color to the outer limit becomes the painterly equivalent of revolution. Moving from open-pane works, in which white or faintly gray planes dominate, with red or blue lying potently at the perimeter, to more monumental arrangements of large, counterbalanced planes of saturated color is like travelling from one climate zone to another. The dramatic shifts of tone and balance attest to Mondrian's achievement in creating an infinitely variable universe of values from the most economical ingredients. There are almost a hundred of these compositions, and not a redundant work among them.

The overwhelming abundance of Neo-Plastic abstractions works brilliantly in the galleries. In the catalogue, however, the curators adopt a sternly tutorial mode. They lament that Mondrian scholars have emphasized the early biography at the expense of concentrating on the masterpieces of the nineteen-twenties and thirties. All we really need to know about the sources and intentions of his best work, they maintain, can be read from the compositions in front of us. (No headsets required.) According to this view, Mondrian's vocation was a prolonged exercise in redefining the nature of painting. It's as if Mondrian were the product of some particularly strenuous seminar on modernism and had been assigned the task of inventing an alternative to the illusionistic visual language that had dominated painting since the Renaissance.

Given this approach, Mondrian's prolonged involvement with Theosophy, the Western Buddhism that sought to access divinity within humanity, may be safely relegated to a biographical footnote. Ignore those haunting photographs of the Dutchman as yogi. Skip his screeds, volumes of them, and be satisfied instead with the self-contained eloquence of the paintings. And stop hunting for lines of continuity that track through the isms. Once we're in the miracle years after the First World War, just forget about trees and stars. Abstraction is abstraction is abstraction.

In this jump-cut version, Mondrian becomes the merciless smasher of his own assumptions. After a late start, with the first true Neo-Plastic work begun when he was forty-seven, Mondrian's career hurtles forward in a series of self-obliterations, and each phase wholly supersedes its predecessor. It is less a journey than a sequence of unanticipated arrivals, and for that reason Yve-Alain Bois calls his dazzling catalogue essay on Mondrian "The Iconoclast." To a certain extent, it's easy to sympathize with the impatience that an acutely focussed critic like Bois feels on being confronted with the clunking historicism that plods through contemporary sociology and ideology, bent on "unpacking" hidden subtexts from the art. Bois doesn't want to unpack. He travels light, with his eyes and his intellect neatly meshed in high gear, and unencumbered by historical baggage.

What a pity, then, that it isn't true, this nimble formalism—or, rather, isn't true enough. Take a powerful early work like "Red Mill at Domburg" (1911). At MOMA, the work is innocently displayed alongside Mondrian's color rhapsodies of sea and shore. But in an interesting survey last year of twentieth-century Dutch art, at the Musée de l'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, the "Red Mill" was shown together with a symbol-laden Mondrian triptych, also from 1911, that the artist, in keeping with his Theosophical convictions, called "Evolution." The triptych is an allegory of the progress of humanity from the corporeal to the spiritual state, and it is perhaps not fortuitous that the stylized frontal figures on the side panels of the allegorical work are identical in composition to the vermillion mill that seems to throb from the blue ground of

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if it's a single striped sari.

Even the mangy cur of the house barks now and then,
and over the mouths of women cheaply had
there's a lock
a golden lock.

—TASLIMA NASRIN

(*Translated, from the Bengali, by Carolyne Wright, Mohammad Nurul Huda, and the author.*)

the other painting—for they were all meant to signify the incomplete process of transmutation, to show earthly objects in mid-metamorphosis, with the cladding of their worldly shape not yet sloughed off.

Heavy-duty metaphysics may slow down the sprint to pure abstraction, but respecting the seriousness of Mondrian's commitment to Theosophy is important to understanding just what he supposed the point of his abstract art to be. As Carel Blotkamp points out in an excellent new monograph, "Mondrian: The Art of Destruction," the painter would have been dismayed to have his paintings read as exercises in pure aesthetics or as exempla of contemporary art-play. His enormous output of explanatory writings leaves not the slightest doubt that for him Neo-Plastic abstraction was the transformation of observation into inner vision. If only a few initiates could see with that inner eye, Mondrian argued, the world might yet be converted to a new, spiritually driven sensibility. The goal was transcendental knowledge, and abstraction was its visual mantra.

Mondrian's passion for metaphysics, then, was not the spare-time crankiness of a full-time artist. It made him the painter he was. He first saw the light of Mme. Helena Blavatsky's Theosophy when he was beginning his experiments with color saturation. Mondrian became a formal adherent, and, although he was never slavishly captive to the doctrines of Theosophy, its core belief in the attainment of wisdom through disembodiment remained important to him for the rest of his life. Still, there's a lugubrious earnestness about Mondrian's quest for the grail of pure abstraction which doesn't sit very comfortably in a MOMA blockbuster. What is more, anyone familiar with the Dutch heritage will immediately recognize, and be moved by, its paradoxes: the struggle between matter and spirit (Carnival and Lent); between the local and the universal; between the parochial flatlands of the Low Countries and the cultural imperialism of Paris; between the humanism of Erasmus and the mortifications of Calvin. Yet it takes nothing away from the courage of Mondrian's inventiveness to see that there are, in fact, clearly marked lines of development that are sustained throughout his career. There is actually nothing wrong with following Mondrian's odyssey from the physical and local to the disembodied and universal. It's just because that journey corresponds so closely to our own instinctively anxious progression from the known to the unknown, from the concrete to the abstract, that Mondrian establishes such a strong bond of sympathy with his beholders.

Notwithstanding the curatorial assertion that nothing in the early work prefigures the later abstractions, no one need be ashamed to notice that the spidery branches screening off the church at Winterswijk reflect Mondrian's early pleasure in Oriental calligraphy, and his decided preference for form over object. And in the paintings from around 1905 to 1910 it's hard to miss Mondrian's truncated and distorted perspective. Even while Mondrian was busy rejecting the dank mournfulness of Dutch Impressionism, he was connected to a much older, native fascination with two-dimensional landscapes, to the ambiguities of the edge, and to a classically Netherlandish obsession with delineation.

MONDRIAN may indeed have hungered to escape the narrow limits of Dutch art and culture, but when he went to Paris, in 1912, he was by no means a naïve apprentice of the Cubists. He did, it's true, worship at the shrine of Cézanne and paint two still-lifes with celadon pots at their centers. In telling ways, however, Mondrian's Cubism moved in the opposite direction from that of Picasso and Braque. The Cubist painters dismantled coherent forms—buildings, household objects, people—and reduced them to the sculptural blocks that they believed existed independently of mere appearance. But Mondrian was still more radical in his decompositions, deflating the volume and mass of his blossom-loaded apple trees and squashing them up against the picture plane as though they were pressed on a windshield. The flattened shapes were then further broken into abrupt arrangements of lines and curves, and were no longer legible as any kind of solid objects.

Can it really be mere happenstance that the moment when Mondrian crossed irreversibly from representation to abstraction—the moment when he had his vision on the road to Damascus—occurred not in Paris but on the shorelines of Zeeland? As anyone who has

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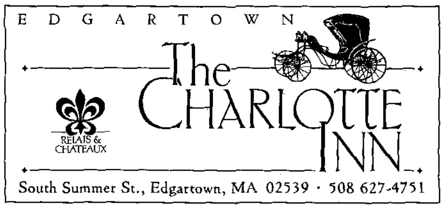
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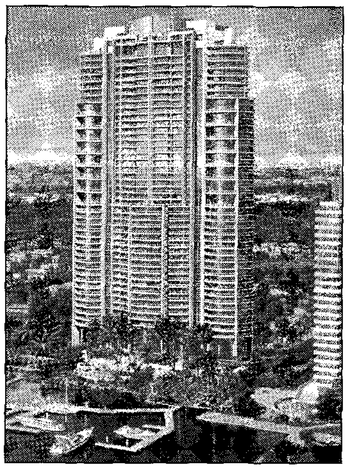

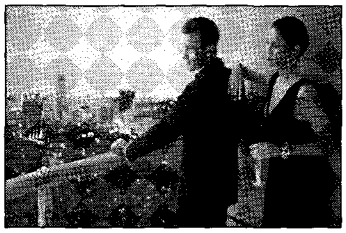

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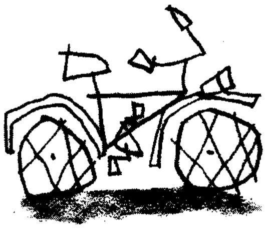
stood on the mudflats of Walcheren knows, the horizon swims in a briny mist; solids and liquids seem to shift about with disconcerting instability. In the summer of 1914, Mondrian came home for a visit, and then, after the war began, found it impossible to return to Paris. Obliged by history to stay among the native emblems that had preoccupied him before he moved to France—the sea and the church—he now transformed them utterly in the light of his urgent new understanding. It's impossible to imagine a more powerful document of this conversion from perception to vision than the "Pier and Ocean" series of 1914-15, beautifully installed in its own room at MOMA. Within the oval format he had acquired from the Cubists, Mondrian executed a sense impression of a rolling sea glimpsed through half-closed eyes, the wave-glitter marked in short, stabbing black horizontals that are penetrated by the vertical axis of a pier or breakwater. In some versions, free areas of chalky-white gouache imply a smear of stars on a fine night. But Mondrian was at pains to disabuse anyone who might think these were landscapes in any traditional sense. Starting out with the memory of a sensory record, they evolve rapidly into independent organizations of lines against a neutral ground: a visualization of what could *not* be seen. It's one of the critical moments of altered sensibility in the history of painting: an optical impression lingering in phantom retinal space even while it loses ground to an alternative, cerebrally constituted vision.

These five years in Holland were a time of extraordinary development. Dutch bourgeois culture, so often misrepresented as staid and parochial, was humming with innovation. The perception that the Netherlands was weighed down with stolid materialism and conventional piety was what fired the founders of the De Stijl movement—Theo van Doesburg, Bart van der Leck, and the architect J. J. P. Oud—to offer a new blueprint for communal life, based on the pure forms of geometry. The movement, utilizing mathematical definitions of beauty, sought to create an entirely fresh social habitat from which the clutter of the past had been expunged. It offered a hospitable climate for Mondrian's ideas, and he wrote a lengthy manifesto on Neo-Plasticism that appeared in the magazine *De Stijl*, in 1917 and 1918. For a time, Mondrian's ideas seemed to outreach his practice, and his painting was hobbled by overtones of intellectual illustration. In the first, tentative experiments with color planes weak little blocks of pink, red, and blue nuzzle up against one another, nervously overlap, or glide away in indeterminate space. Eventually, however, Mondrian began to create modular grids of small rectangles, with each unit repeating the format of the whole painting. In other works, he used patterns of diamonds within which interior patterns emerge and recede. For the only time in his career, the work becomes self-conscious and mechanical; some of the hesitant products of this interval suggest the tile floors and stained-glass windows that occupied a number of his colleagues in De Stijl.



Once again, a move made a difference. Upon returning to Paris, Mondrian rented a studio and immediately began to turn it into a Neo-Plastic habitat, gluing pieces of painted cardboard to the walls. And suddenly the painful conflict between the machine-stamped determinism of the De Stijl checkerboards and his own freer intuitions spontaneously resolved itself. The rectangles expanded in size and contracted in number. Everything becomes simpler, cleaner, and much more potent. The color planes are now limited to primary colors: red, yellow, and blue are used in virtually every painting. The planes are never contiguous. The armature of the compositions—the dark borders around color and white planes—hardens from gray to heavily painted black. Soon the lines themselves evolve from passive devices of containment and proportion into dynamic carriers of rhythm.

Yve-Alain Bois insists that these are never adamantine structures, and he is right. Within the strong scaffolding of the abstractions, there is vital, unstable energy. Mondrian was always suspicious of balance, even as he sought to attain it, and throughout the nineteen-twenties he was willing to try anything to avoid the ossification of his habitual forms. Lines thicken, becoming virtual planes.

Color planes shrink to the breadth of line. Manipulating the variables, Mondrian arrived, in the late nineteen-twenties, at something very like abstract monumentalism. In the immaculately organized "Composition No. III" (1929), for example, the unenclosed edges of the big upright red rectangle are balanced in the opposite quarter of the painting by a frame of hard black lines and fat strips of solid color. Even the white strip is densely overpainted to avoid any impression of vacancy. But just at the height of this achievement Mondrian became wary of creative seizure. Fear of immobility pushed him in new directions. The aim, unflaggingly pursued, was never pure harmony but, rather, the perpetual motion of opposing forces.

If Mondrian was sustained by his resolve during his Paris years, it was just as well, for, aside from the occasional show at the gallery of Léonce Rosenberg, he soldiered on without recognition or money. Paying the rent for his Neo-Plastic studio meant having to turn out insipid watercolor flower paintings on the side. Though he remained single-minded, he was not solitary. Impressions of a Dutch hermit in Montparnasse are quite misleading. Theo Van Doesburg's wife, Nelly, remembered him as a shy man who was hungry for company, both intellectual and social. He was a member of the Circle and Square group that included Léger and Kandinsky, and he would sometimes invite a fellow-artist, like László Moholy-Nagy, to collaborate with him on a work. Once he got the paint off his fingers, Mondrian would spend evenings at the Italian circus in Montmartre, or linger over drinks at a café. Having taken the trouble to learn the tango and the foxtrot, he would try out the steps at a dance hall, his long, straight legs moving precisely over the parquet; he sometimes launched into invented moves without bothering to notice the effect on his partner. Where women were concerned, Mondrian was generally hopeless. After a failed engagement, he became convinced that art was incompatible with conjugality, and in his case he was probably right.

It took Mondrian much of the nineteen-thirties to get Neo-Plasticism to trip the light fantastic. The decade has often been passed over in previous shows of his work, but MOMA's display

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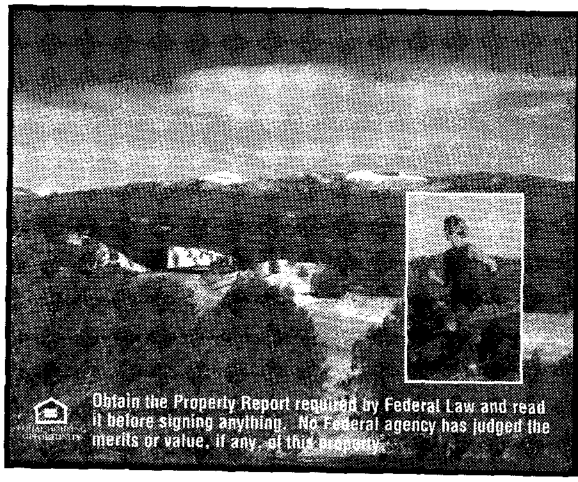

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highlights every one of the moves. Mondrian began in a gingerly fashion, loosening the stays of his linear construction by doubling and tripling the lines. Narrow spaces open up, exposing delicate planes, which then appear to shake loose from the surface and travel up and down over the composition, creating a trellis that presupposes just the effects of superimposition that Mondrian had spent the better part of the nineteen-twenties eliminating. Yellow begins to dominate the other colors, weakening the rigidity of the black girders, and even, in one extraordinary composition, replacing them altogether. In "Composition No. III Blanc-Jaune," an amazing painting, which took Mondrian from 1935 to 1942 to complete to his satisfaction, the narrow space between lines that is characteristic of many of the nineteen-thirties experiments has broadened to a vertical corridor. At right, a broadly spaced black-and-white plane is surmounted by a brilliant cadmium-yellow plane pouring out to the upper edge; to the left, a blue area seems to be contained by the old, hard black line until one notices that the line itself has grown into a little black rectangular patch—the kin of other red and black ribbons that lie at the perimeter like flying buttresses.

None of these moves, studied or agile, should be thought of as mere aesthetic adjustments. Admirers like Clement Greenberg have judged the most profound consequence of his work to be the reduction of painting to its intrinsic elements, but for Mondrian such considerations still came second to his quest for spiritual self-knowledge. In a 1919 essay, Mondrian had written that "the deepest purpose of painting has always been to give concrete existence, through color and line, to the universe that reveals itself in contemplation." Twenty years later he was still trying to produce an art that was, in effect, "a permanent contemplation."

Conversion to the creed wasn't a condition of admiration. In the late twenties and thirties, Mondrian's work was shown more widely, in Zurich, Stockholm, and Brussels. The great Kröller-Müller collection of modern art in the Netherlands prominently displayed his Neo-Plastic compositions, and his work was sufficiently well known to have made an impact on the young New York artist Harry Holtzman. In 1934, Holtzman visited Mondrian in Paris and became a devoted disciple; after Munich, he grew concerned for his hero's safety. In the fall of 1938, Mondrian moved to London, but two years later, after the start of the Blitz, Holtzman arranged for him to make the move to America.

IN late September of 1940, Mondrian boarded the S.S. Samaria in Liverpool and sailed to New York. His reputation had preceded him across the Atlantic. In the twenties, the collector Katherine Dreier, who had been alerted by Duchamp to Mondrian's work, sought out his paintings for an exhibition organized by her Société Anonyme at the Brooklyn Museum. By the early thirties, New York dealers like Sidney Janis were buying his work in Paris and singing his praises at home. Alfred Barr's 1936 MOMA show was the ultimate endorsement. When he arrived in America, he was a celebrated refugee.

Unlike the melancholy exiles streaming into Manhattan, Mondrian revelled in the New World. New York must have seemed the Neo-Plastic city of his dreams and visions: wonderfully uncentered and anonymous, brilliantly lit against the deathly European blackout, and magically free from the chafing sores of ancient history. His studio, on Fifty-sixth Street near First Avenue, rapidly filled with arrangements of painted matte boards—"as gay as a child's wall," one visitor thought. He painted, as he had done for many years, flat on a table, while using his easel to prop up paintings that completed the interior design. He smoked seriously; listened to Pinetop Smith and Cow Cow Davenport, eight to the bar on his Victrola; kicked up his heels with Lee Krasner; and, in the back of a Checker cab, smooched with Peggy Guggenheim, who was then married to Max Ernst.

The paintings themselves became emancipated from their metaphysical vows. The great centers of the Neo-Plastic masterworks of the twenties and early thirties crumbled into hectic particolored mosaics, ribbons of motion shot through with spangled, flickering energy. The rigid black lines that held the classic distributions of planes in order now surrendered their monopoly to bands of yellow, red, and even white. For the first time since the checkerboard modular grids of 1917 and 1918, Mondrian was satisfied with creating atmospherics, letting his brush shimmy over the surface of modern life. Though his execution was as painstaking as ever, ideas came to him in sudden Manhattan visions. One morning in 1942, he told a friend that he had "dreamed a lovely composition"; the dream was "Victory Boogie Woogie," which, along with "Broadway Boogie Woogie," was one of the last paintings he made before his death, at seventy-one, in 1944. Yet neither work should be thought of as remotely valedictory. As packed with action as the city itself, they constitute one of the great closing acts of modern art.

Suppose that Mondrian had survived the war? Would he have, like so many others in the "Artists-in-Exile Show" of 1942, returned to Europe? Perhaps it's my own immigrant fancy, but I like to imagine him staying in Manhattan in his old age, living off the high voltage of the place and generously encouraging the young New York painters who invoked him as they, too, toiled in the flat fields of color. (Before his death, Mondrian shocked his disciples by approving of the drips of the young Jackson Pollock.) In any event, it's impossible to stand in his studio, lovingly reconstructed at MOMA, and not feel touched by his serene playfulness. Of course, in the presence of so many scrupulously fashioned paintings, the pains of Mondrian's Lenten labors are always evident, but one is continually warmed by the carnival fire that played behind the serious spectacles and dark suits. We may be no nearer to Mondrian's redeeming vision of an immaterial culture—not in midtown Manhattan, at any rate—but no one can go through this stirring exhibition and fail to be touched by the artist's exhilaration, independence, and clear-sightedness. His majestic abstractions may not bring us any closer to Theosophical Heaven, but at least they put some distance between us and the prospects of Hell that, in these millennial days, take up more than their fair share of exhibition space. ♦

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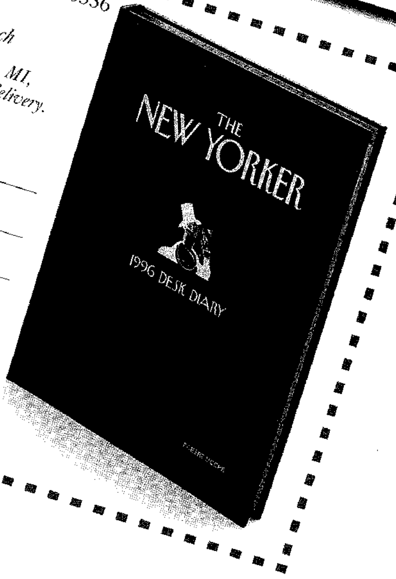
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PROFILE

THE POLITICS OF PERCEPTION

How did an outsider like Newt Gingrich maneuver his fellow-Republicans into letting him do almost anything he wants? By forging the bizarre master plan that continues to build his base—and increasingly allows for no deviations.

BY CONNIE BRUCK

I—FIRST YOU PUT UP THE FAÇADE

FOR roughly thirty-five years, Newt Gingrich has studied political leaders—despots as well as democrats—and has worked hard at refashioning himself so that he might become one. "I'm not a natural leader," he acknowledged when I asked him about this process, in a recent interview in his office at the Capitol. And, indeed, his physical presence is unprepossessing: a countenance that is pale and doughy, a gaze so guarded that it seems entirely without affect, and a habit of nervously working his fingers together. In the next breath, as though thinking that his words might be construed as a negative admission, he said, "I'm too intellectual, I'm too abstract, I think too much." He added that being a natural leader requires "a level of personal skill I didn't have," but now, he said, "I'm fairly good at it."

In his consuming struggle to achieve his goal, Gingrich drew on mounds of focus-group research, a German-military model, business-management tracts, Clausewitz, the study of mass movements, historical novels, Sun-tzu, Alvin and Heidi Toffler's futurism, and more, all combined in a kind of roux—a political sense so acute that, as one longtime associate has said, when it comes to politics Gingrich can hear the door of a Volkswagen closing five blocks away. (Over the years, Gingrich has referred to himself as a "professional politician"; these days, no doubt noting the public's aversion to politicians, he often refers to himself as a "history teacher.") That his odd, eclectic preparation might culminate in his present incarnation—as Speaker of the House and, some would argue, the most powerful politician in the country—would have seemed implausible to all but Gingrich himself, and a handful of his most devout followers.

For Gingrich, life is war, and political strategy mirrors military strategy. Since his earliest years in Congress (he was first elected in 1978), he has lived by what he calls a "planning model"—which entails vision, strategies, projects, tactics. It is adapted from the German military model, having been introduced to Gingrich in the mid-seventies by his close friend and adviser Steve Hanser, who was a fellow history professor at West Georgia College and is a specialist on the Wehrmacht (the German armed forces). What was once Gingrich's personal construct has now become the organizational model for the House Republican Conference—something to which the members have applied themselves at their annual retreats, and which has been followed religiously by Gingrich's lieutenants, in carrying out their various assignments.

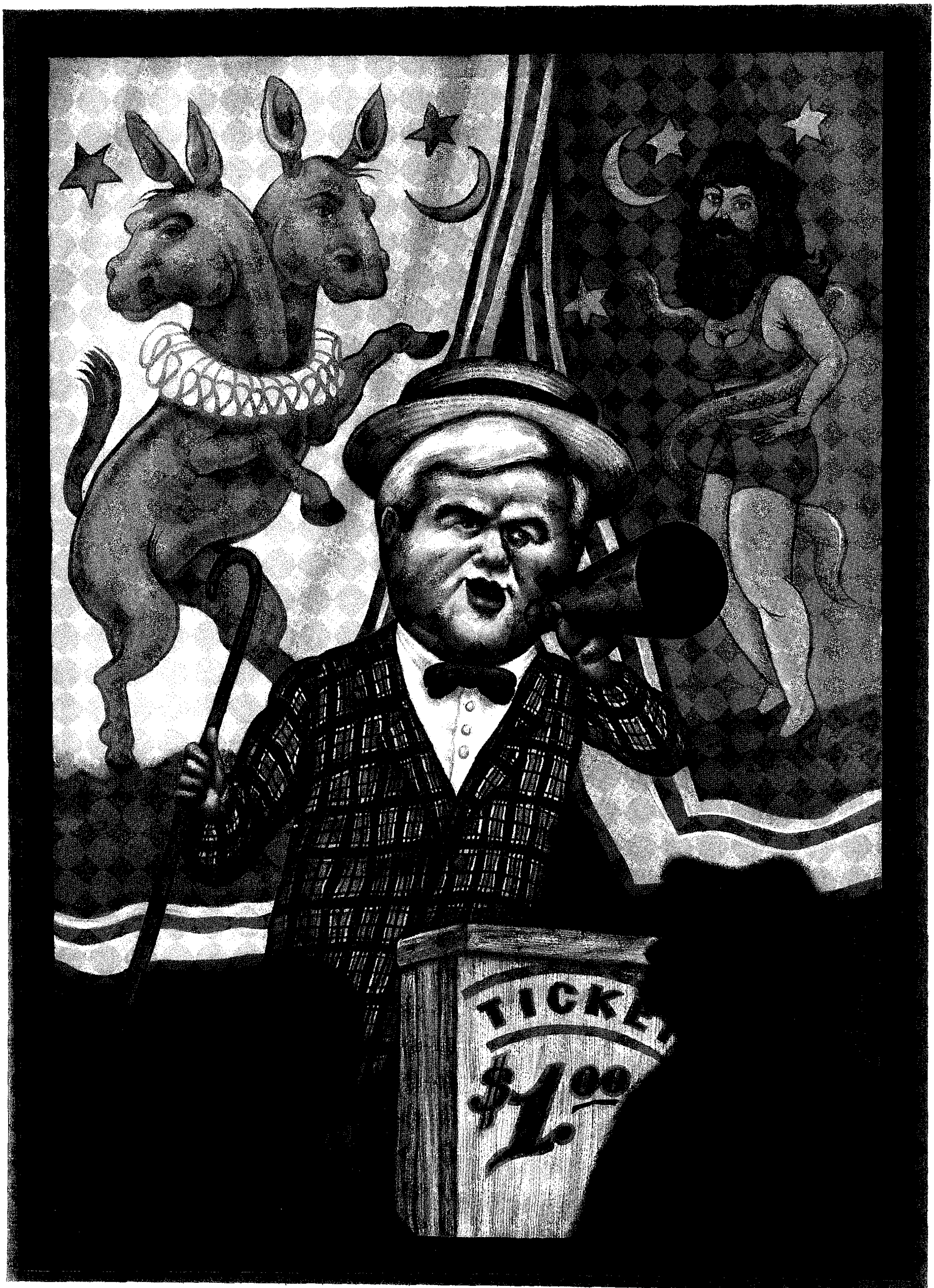
If Gingrich's "vision" was to become the most powerful politician in this country, his "strategy" was to recruit, train, and elect to the House his own army of followers, who would vote for him for Speaker and do his bidding. It was a plan breathtaking in its boldness, stunning in its execution: as eloquent a tribute to the military model as any victorious battle campaign. And it was, of course, only prologue; the real drama of Gingrich's dominion has just begun to unfold.

When I interviewed Gingrich on the afternoon of August 4th, he was ebullient, having just achieved passage of a crucial spending bill for federal labor, health, and education programs. "Last night was clearly . . . the biggest victory we've had since we got here," he declared. The bill has since been modified by the more moderate Senate and must confront the possibility of a Presidential veto—although Gingrich at one point threatened, in a remarkably reckless expression of his power, to force the United States to default on its debt obligations unless Clinton acceded. However things turn out, the bill was a milestone in the enactment of the Gingrich agenda. It would eliminate dozens of education and social programs championed by Democrats (including one that was to provide summer jobs for six hundred thousand youths, and another that has helped the poor pay their utility bills), provide major gains for the anti-abortion movement, and grant much sought concessions to business.

Getting the bill through had not been easy. During the last two days, moderate Republicans had broken ranks three times to vote with Democrats, but in the end the bill had passed largely intact, with only eighteen of the House's two hundred and thirty-two Republicans voting against it.

For the majority of House Republicans, Gingrich is not only a powerful leader but a deeply charismatic one, who inspires them by evoking, time and again, the meaning and majesty of their mission. Many of his followers seem, at times, like pale imitations of the Master. As the longtime conservative activist Paul Weyrich has said, referring to Gingrich's political advisers and also to large numbers of Republican House members, "Today, they think like Newt, they talk like Newt." But they are not yet *enough* like Newt to satisfy the demanding Speaker. Gingrich told me that once the vote on the spending bill was taken, shortly after 1 A.M., he and his lieutenants held a debriefing session un-

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ANITA KUNZ



The question that seems to be always in the forefront of Gingrich's mind is: How can this best be marketed?

til 4:30 A.M. to figure out why the vote had been so close. He concluded that one of the problems was that the members were not listening well enough.

In his panoply of learned skills, there may be none upon which Gingrich, a naturally garrulous person, prides himself more than listening. He has a "leadership model"—"Listen, learn, help, lead"—which he has followed for years. "When people know that you will listen, learn, and help," Gingrich told me, "they will *ask* you to lead."

How had he come to this model?

"It started with an effort to understand how you build a human model that's cybernetic in an information age," he said, lapsing into his favorite jargon, "to get feedback, so you know what the situation is—what the military would call the intelligent preparation of the battlefield."

This is a very particular kind of listening, he continued, in his didactic way. It is not listening "transactionally" but, rather, listening to learn. And, because his members are deficient in this regard, he added, he had just told them, at a lunch meeting of the Republican Conference—that is, of all the Republican representatives in the House—"Come this fall, we may have listening training."

Listening training? Trying to get my bearings, I asked who would do such training.

"A consultant who specializes in listening," he responded, with that ready, razor-edged disdain which so marks his personality, and is reflected in his countenance—even when he is trying hard to be genial and Reaganesque. "I want every member of this Conference to listen better to each other. They will know better what they're saying, they will appreciate each other more. This is a giant extended family."

The current Gingrich approach is idiosyncratic indeed, using principles of business organization and military strategy wedded with motivational psychology—Rommel at Esalen. Moreover, the question that seems to be always in the forefront of Gingrich's mind is: How can this best be marketed? His own image is, for him, the subject of a constant calculus.

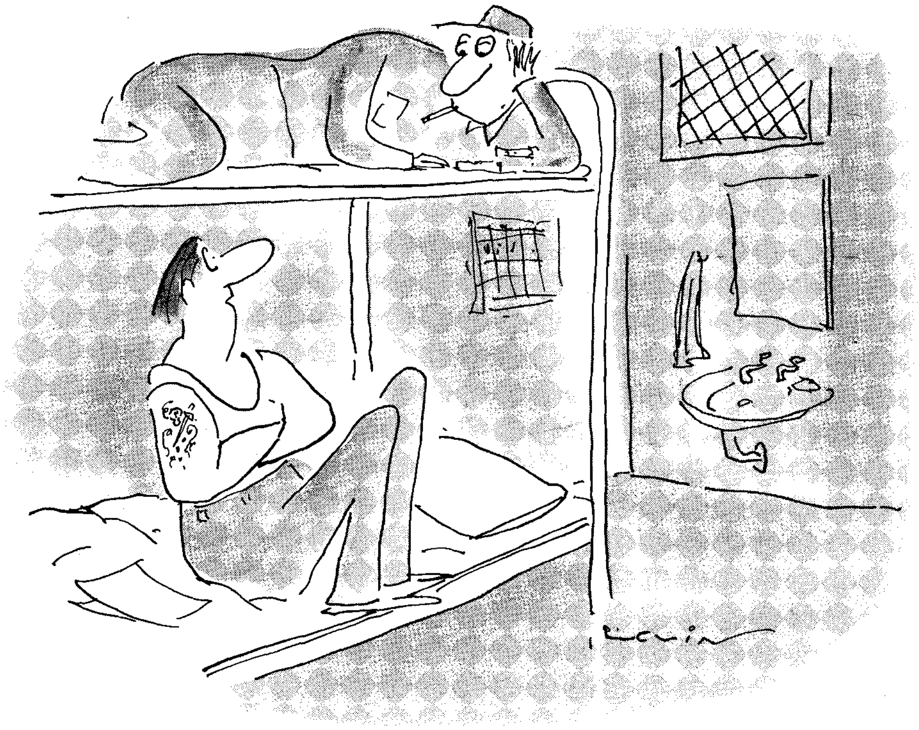
One associate told me that early this year Gingrich was reading about George Washington. "Washington used to tell dirty jokes, and he had affairs—but then he made himself into an icon, because he thought that that was what the country needed. And Newt, now, was trying to make *himself* into an icon." During our interview, Gingrich told me that the previous night he had for a time refused to allow a *Congressional Quarterly* photographer to take his picture. "I did not want a picture in defeat," he declared. "I would only let them take a picture after we'd won." As has become all too common in our political life, when Gingrich gave his nationally televised speech last spring, his pollsters had focus groups turning dials to register their responses to his words and delivery as he spoke.

In the light of all this concern about his public image, it must be especially nettling to him that he has remained unpopular with the American people. Political consultants who have done polling for him attribute his poor numbers to his demeanor ("arrogant," "rude," "not statesmanlike") and to the array of charges pending against him before the House Ethics Committee. It is really quite paradoxical that Gingrich has been able to achieve the level of power he has in this country from an electoral base as slight and fragile as his Georgia district: twice in the past five years, he was very nearly defeated. Indeed, his difficulty in appealing to voters now stands as the greatest obstacle between him and his next goal—which, his advisers generally agree, is to achieve the Presidency, be it in 1996 or, more likely, later.

In an apparent effort to appear more statesmanlike, Gingrich is toning down his rhetoric; his language is somewhat less scathing, and he doesn't talk anymore about his desire to "move the planet." In our interview, he underplayed the degree of power he wields as Speaker, emphasizing that he delegates a great deal and favors a team approach. But he is, Weyrich told me, "the most powerful Speaker since Cannon"—Joseph Gurney (Uncle Joe) Cannon, who, as Speaker from 1903 to 1911, engendered the arbitrary, dictatorial control of procedure which became known as Cannonism—and Cannon, Weyrich added, is someone Gingrich has studied closely. Gingrich has, in fact, transformed the nature of the Speakership and, one may assume, would aim to transform that of the Presidency as well.

Another associate said, wryly, "He wants to be king."

In public in recent months, Gingrich has often alluded to Franklin Delano Roosevelt as a model of leadership. But last November, just a few days after the elections, at a private fund-raising dinner (where he was hailed with the fervent salutation—"Newt! Newt! Newt!



"I had a pretty sleazy lawyer, but evidently not sleazy enough."

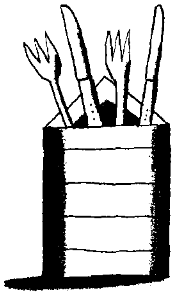
Newt!"—that has become the chant of the Republican revolution), he spoke about another model: Kemal Atatürk, the founder and first President of the Republic of Turkey.

"Let me say one last thing," Gingrich told his audience, "because I sometimes startle people, because I'm so intense and I'm so committed to changing things quickly. In the mid-nineteen-twenties, Kemal Atatürk was in the process of modernizing Turkey. He was faced with an enormous problem. The Ottoman Empire had collapsed, the Turkish people had been driven back within the boundaries of what is now modern Turkey. They had an enormous crisis of psychology—they were a backward country, and yet they knew their future lay in modernization and in understanding the European world and the industrial world better.

"And he reached the conclusion, after considerable deep and painful thought, that writing in the language pattern they had written in no longer would work, and that they had to change literally the basic script of their language to a Western script. He then decided that the only way to make that change was to do it suddenly and decisively. . . . So in a very poor country, with very few resources . . . he said, 'We have to enlist every educated Turk and we have to turn the nation into a classroom.' And in six months' time they transformed Turkish society. It is one of the great heroic acts of the twentieth century . . . done by an act of inspired emotional and moral leadership by someone who was regarded as the savior of the nation."

The appeal that such a leader—and, even more, "savior"—holds for Gingrich is plain: it is to that historical status that he ardently aspires. When I asked Gingrich about Atatürk, he replied that he had been studying him "for a quarter of a century." Gingrich had emphasized in his speech that Atatürk had brought about this change without violence or relying on secret police. What Gingrich did not mention, however, was that Atatürk, in imposing on the Turkish Republic the form of a Westernized secular state, had exerted an iron rule, and while he did not use violence in tandem with his edict on language, he did arrest journalists, suppress the independent press, execute his opponents, and, ultimately—through a long-term, carefully plotted, and psychologically adroit campaign—assume supreme dictatorial powers.

In Gingrich's youth there seems to have been little external encouragement for his sense of himself as a world-historical figure, one of a line of those heroes, described by Hegel, who were both "practical, political men" and also "thinking men" (as Gingrich has described himself). As a student, he did not seem bound for great things; his mother, Kathleen Gingrich, told me that none of her son's teachers had said he was exceptional. Nor did she or his stepfather attempt to inculcate such vaulting ambition in him. His relationship with his stepfather, Robert Gingrich, a rigid, taciturn individual ("He can go a whole day and say only fifty words," his wife said), was difficult. And, because from age ten to sixteen he was periodically uprooted when Bob Gingrich, an Army officer, was reassigned—from Pennsylvania to Kansas, then to France, and from there to Germany—the boy did not have many lasting friendships; Gingrich himself has said that he was "very lonely," "very driven," and "pretty weird as a kid." Whatever difficulties he may have had, they did not cause him to be retiring; he was, rather, always obtruding himself, craving center stage. He recalls as the landmark success of his early years his having talked his way, when he was only ten, into addressing the Harrisburg City Council in an appeal for a municipal zoo. In his recent book "To Renew America" Gingrich writes, "When it appeared in the paper the next day, I was hooked forever on public life."



He is given to saying that his sense of mission originated with a kind of peak experience at Verdun, the First World War battlefield, which he visited at the age of fifteen with his parents when they were living in France. He was appalled by the senseless carnage that occurred there, and, he says now, resolved to do all he could to prevent such cataclysms. "It gives me a certain inner strength other politicians don't have, because I see this as a calling, as something that someone has to do if America is to keep the freedoms we believe in," he said to a reporter a number of years ago. Gingrich's family doesn't recall that he had a political epiphany at the time, but his half sister Roberta Brown did volunteer that after his Verdun expedition he hung a German helmet, a French helmet, and part of a grenade on his bedroom wall. In any case, Gingrich has repeatedly depicted that teen-age moment in Verdun as the transforming experience of his life, when the mantle of cosmic responsibility descended on him.

After attending Emory University, Gingrich entered Tulane in 1967 as a graduate student, and there his adviser was Pierre-Henri Laurent, a professor of European history. Laurent became quite close to Gingrich in the late sixties. After his freshman year at Emory, Gingrich had married his high-school math teacher, Jacqueline Battley, who was seven years his senior, and by the time he met Laurent, Newt and Jackie had two young daughters. Laurent, who is now at Tufts University, and who has stayed in touch with Gingrich over the years, recalled that he had at first been concerned about having Gingrich in the European-history doctoral program, because Gingrich, as an undergraduate, had taken mainly American-history courses. "But he gave me what I called his 'Verdun answer' "—about how when he had gone to that scene he could *feel* the enormity of what had occurred. "This was a way of introducing himself to me as a culturally empathetic young man. . . . I was very taken."

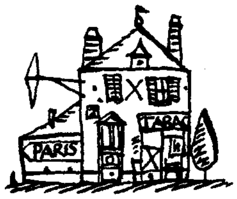
Laurent came to regard Gingrich as "not really an idea man—a collector of ideas, more," and as someone who was "brash, always interjecting himself, looking for the spotlight, striving hard for attention"; inasmuch as he was "bright, not brilliant," he could have been "modestly successful" if he had chosen to stay in academic life. There was, however, never any question of that. Gingrich told Laurent that he was set on entering politics ("What's this kid want to be a selectman for?" Laurent recalls having asked himself), and he was then "modestly antiwar, pro-civil rights, *very* pro-Rockefeller." When the time came for Gingrich to look for a job, Laurent began making inquiries at Wayne State University, in Detroit, where he thought he might be able to help Gingrich obtain a position, but soon Gingrich told him that he had already been in contact with West Georgia College, in Carrollton, Georgia.

"I said, 'Why West Georgia?' " Laurent recalled. “And he said, ‘Look, you’re right, it’s not significant—it’s in the right district!’ ” Gingrich then explained that the congressman in that district, Representative John Flynt, had already been elected eight times, and he thought Flynt would be vulnerable.

About a year after arriving at West Georgia, Gingrich, at twenty-eight, applied to be made chairman of the History Department—and, the following year (undaunted by his failure), to be president of the college. When that, too, failed, he met with the new president, delivered a critique of the institution, and was given the assignment of reorganizing it.

Daryl Conner, then a graduate student in psychology, was enlisted to assist Gingrich in his reorganization efforts, and Conner quickly learned that Gingrich viewed this attempted reformation of the West Georgia system as training for something much, much larger. “It couldn’t have been more than a few days before we were talking about what he thought he needed to do to save Western civilization,” I was told by Conner, who is now a “change consultant” based in Atlanta; he has remained a friend of Gingrich’s over the years, and has conducted seminars for members of Congress at Gingrich’s request.

Dr. Mel Steely, a history professor at West Georgia who would become Gingrich’s aide-de-camp and is currently writing a biography of him, told me that Gingrich and Conner’s central concept was that people must feel an “ownership” in the changes that were being instituted. “You meet with them beforehand, get their dreams and ideas. Then you come back with your solution—it may be the *same* solution you would have had anyway, but it is phrased in such a way that they”—the participants—“feel this is what *they* were talking about,” Steely explained.



After only a couple of years at West Georgia, Gingrich lost interest in teaching history; he focussed more on futurism (this is when he first met Alvin and Heidi Toffler, whom he has promoted so heavily in recent months) and on environmental studies, and was therefore moved from the History Department to the Geography Department. Nothing in academia seemed to engage him for long—presumably because it was all so peripheral to his overriding goal. Conner told me, “When I met him, he said he wanted to be Speaker. I asked, ‘Why not President?’ And he gave me a lesson in the power base of the Speaker and the power base of the President, and then said, ‘Why would I want to be President?’ ”

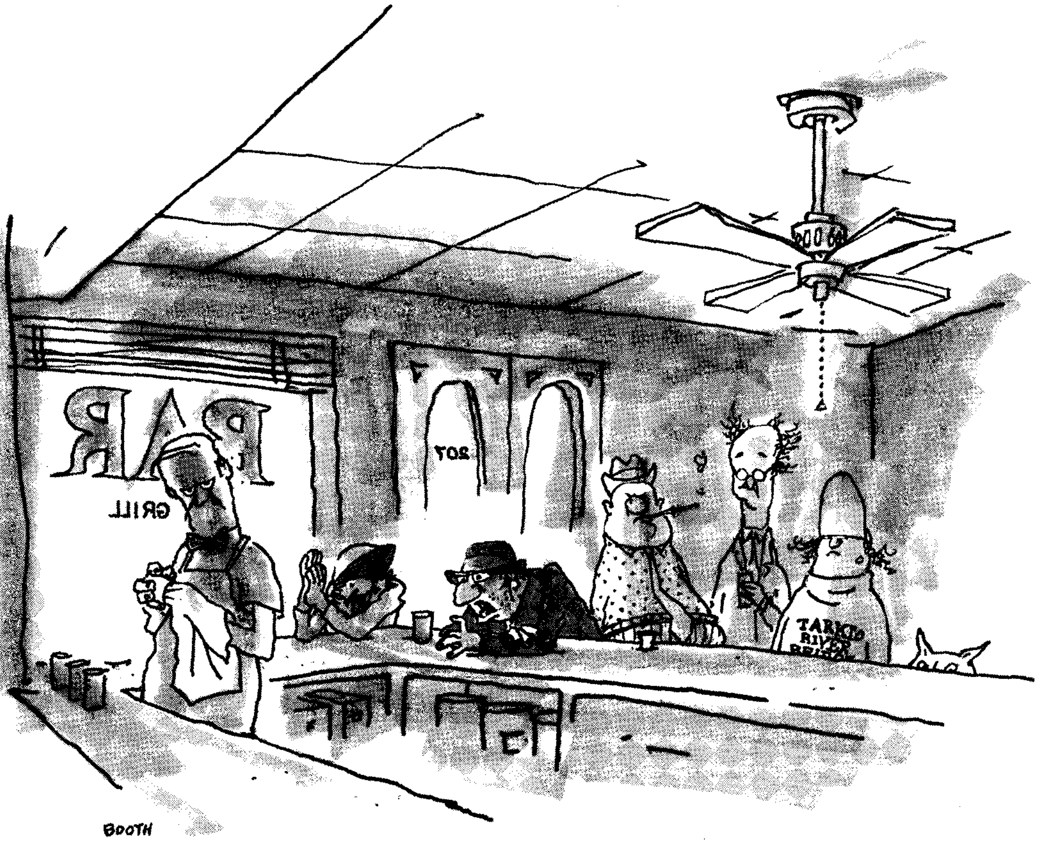
In 1974, Gingrich ran against Flynt, a conservative Southern Democrat, and lost. (A photograph from the campaign shows Gingrich at the height of seventies style: with heavy black-rimmed glasses and longish hair and sideburns, and wearing a green shirt with a polka-dot tie and a plaid jacket.) He ran again in 1976, and lost again. In 1978, Flynt retired, perhaps unwilling to confront his hyperkinetic nemesis one more time, and Gingrich found himself running against a former state senator, Virginia Shapard. Whereas Gingrich had run his two previous campaigns with largely volunteer help, this time he hired an experienced campaign manager, Carlyle Gregory, who attempted to impose more order on the campaign, and also on the candidate. He recalled meeting with Gingrich to discuss his job. “We met at the Waffle House—it was the only place open late at night down there—and he said he was challenging me to be a Jedi knight,” Gregory said, grinning at the recollection. “Everything was on a grand scale. ‘We are going to fix planetary systems!’ Not congressional districts, one at a time. ‘It’s getting people to *believe:* “Follow me!” ’ ”

In the course of that campaign, Gingrich schooled Gregory in the ideas he had developed about campaigns and politics. “He was a student of history, and he used to say that there’s a mythology that builds up around causes—like fables or stories,” Gregory said. “And campaigns that have a mythology are dramatically more powerful than those that don’t. You have to be bigger than life. Then you try to live up to the image. Newt would always tell me, ‘In a campaign, first you put up the façade, then you go around and build the building.’ ” He went on, “It’s a constant reinvention of yourself. Newt would say, ‘There’s a new Newt!’ We would say, cynically, ‘Is this Newt No. 7 or Newt No. 8?’ He sees himself as being in process.”

Gregory also said that in 1978 Gingrich was reading the novel “Shōgun,” by James Clavell, and that a major character—Toranaga, a seventeenth-century samurai warlord—had a powerful influence on him. Daryl Conner, too, told me that Toranaga was a critical model for Gingrich. The book is a narrative of Toranaga’s quest for the absolute power of shogun. Throughout the book, Toranaga, who confides in no one, violently repudiates the suggestion of his most loyal followers that he should seek to become shogun, even calling it “treason.” Yet, through his study of individuals’ psychology, his patience in listening, his system of punishment and reward, his establishment of an elaborate information network of spies, and his talent in projecting a wholly false self-image (he is an accomplished Noh actor), Toranaga is able to use, manipulate, and deceive all who come in contact with him; thus, in the end he achieves his goal. He will become shogun, and, moreover (this the reader learns at the very end), it has also been Toranaga’s long-held secret plan to rid Japan of white people.

“Newt said, ‘Toranaga I think is the perfect example of a leader—you should read it,’ ” Gregory said. “The way Toranaga used people and manipulated events and built a mythology about himself—I think that had a lot to do with how Newt saw himself.” To Gingrich, Toranaga represented, in Gregory’s words, “the master politician, maneuvering the system to do what he wants to do.”

Gingrich beat Shapard, and finally achieved his preliminary goal. During his first term in Washington, he later told Pierre Laurent, he met a young woman named Marianne Ginther, fell in love with her, started an affair, and, in the summer of 1980, left his wife, Jackie. In 1984, *Mother Jones* ran what has become the famous story of Newt’s visiting Jackie in her hospital room, after she had undergone surgery for cancer, and pulling out his yellow pad to go over their divorce settlement. The story also reported that Jackie had had to go to court to force him to make his support payments, and that a collection had been taken up at their church for her and the two girls. Gingrich has persistently denied the accounts, but Laurent told me that after several hours of dinner conversation one night not long after the magazine story appeared—a discussion that Gingrich had initiated, seeming to want Laurent and his wife to "legitimize" what he had done—it became clear "that the *Mother Jones* article was essentially right."



"Now, if New York were sunny and bright like Colorado, then that would be another story."

• •

People were appalled at his treatment of Jackie. Richard Dangle, formerly the dean of West Georgia, who had been a friend of Gingrich's for years, and continued to be for a time even after his divorce, told me, "Much of what Newt is today is owed to Jackie. They lived *very* modestly. She did without nice clothes, nice furnishings—all they made went into his campaigns. The hours she spent, handing out leaflets, standing on street corners! And she even helped keep Newt humble sometimes."

The disillusionment in Carrollton, moreover, went far beyond his divorce. Dangle and many other people from the college community had supported Gingrich in his seventies campaigns because they saw him as a reformer, a futurist, and an environmentalist. He had been very pro-civil rights and, as Dangle said, "proud to declare himself a Rockefeller Republican." Watching his rightward shift during his first few years in Washington, they felt they had been had, personally and politically. "He's a user," Dangle said. "He uses people and discards them."

A former Gingrich staff person who has known him well over the years, and who is a loyalist, said, "People become so disillusioned and disappointed in Newt. It's not that he lies to them, exactly. It's that he's a chameleon"—a word that comes up often in conversations with those who have known Gingrich—"and they see in him what they want to see."

PERHAPS Gingrich's most important political relationship has been with Paul Weyrich, the rather formal, intense, devoutly religious founder of NET–Political NewsTalk Television, who is sometimes referred to as a Father of the New Right. Through his grassroots strategy and tactics over the past two decades, Weyrich has been to a great degree responsible for shifting the national debate to the right. It appears to have been, from the start, a relationship without illusion: a marriage of opportunism. Weyrich saw that Gingrich was no true comrade-in-arms, and they would often be at odds, but he believed that Gingrich could be uniquely useful in furthering his goals—and Gingrich made essentially the same calculation about Weyrich.

In 1975, Gingrich attended a campaign school in Wisconsin run by Weyrich and J. Frederic (Fritz) Rench, a Wisconsin businessman and a major conservative activist. Terry Kohler, the Wisconsin investor who has contributed generous amounts of money to right-wing causes, told me, "It was with Rench and Weyrich that Newt was energized to come to understand a lot about the political opportunities that were there for a conservative. That was when Newt was on the wrong side. He'd been for Rockefeller! He'd been a history professor who was an environmentalist!"

Weyrich spotted talent in Gingrich. "I made a conscious effort to make Newt a star of the conservative movement," he told me. "We had magazines, bulletins, and I got him featured on the cover of every one. No one had heard of him. I made an effort to be Newt's promoter. I had a lot of connections and outreach to groups that he didn't think of as conservative—police unions, for example. I networked him with every conceivable group."

After the election of 1980, Gingrich called Weyrich and asked him to assemble some people he trusted for a strategy session. Weyrich recalled that Gingrich opened the meeting by saying he had calculated that if they did things right in twelve years they would take over the House. According to Weyrich, the basic outlines for what would happen, as it turned out, over the next fourteen years were put in place there: "We decided we had to learn to frame issues so as to seize the moral high ground; we had to develop better systems of communication; we had to learn to nationalize campaigns."

It was there, too, that Gingrich's slogan "Conservative Opportunity Society" was formulated; its rhetorical opposite was "Liberal Welfare State." A Gingrich handout from that time puts those two phrases at the top of a page; under each are listed the simplistic, shorthand polar opposites that he has since promulgated in thousands of speeches, in his televised college course, and in his two nonfiction books. There have been some refinements and updatings over time, but the substance remains the same. Under the "Conservative Opportunity" heading is "Protecting the innocent by stopping criminals, especially drug dealers," and under the "Liberal" heading "Too much power for the police is as much a danger as are criminals and drug dealers." "No tax increases, and tax cuts whenever possible" is contrasted with "Higher taxes on almost everything."

Gingrich is fond of invoking the apocalypse (the "dark and bloody planet") that will come to pass if we do not commit ourselves to radical change—and the bright promise of the information-age future if we do. About Gingrich's use of polarity and exaggeration, Conner told me, "If the status quo does not seem intolerable, the idea of changing may be intriguing, but it will not happen. So you have to make convincing the pain of extending what people have—while you offer a clear alternative."

Conner went on to say, "Gingrich is a student of large technique, of mass movements. He would study any historical figure—whether he agreed with their politics or not—and how they orchestrated it. Newt can turn down the music and watch what they do." Conner mentioned that he and Gingrich were both movie buffs, and said that after he watched the movie "Marjoe," a documentary about a charlatan preacher who modelled his stage manner after Mick Jagger's, he told Gingrich to watch it. "Newt is like Marjoe," he said. "Marjoe learned how to be a healer, he learned how to prance up and down the stage by studying technique—he was a con artist."

A member of Gingrich's congressional staff in the eighties recalled the special quality that he had watched Gingrich project in certain situations. "It's the way you're drawn to a carnival barker—'Come in and your life will be changed!' Newt has been doing this tent show for years, and countless young Republicans have said 'Yes!' " This man added that he had heard Gingrich, over the years, "say utter garbage with as much conviction as he says the other things. That does scare me—but a definition of a good carnival barker is: He believes his own message."

Though Gingrich, once in Congress, quickly came to portray himself as a fiery kind of conservative, there were those who watched his voting record and decided that he was a charlatan. "People always used to call it the Conservative *Opportunistic* Society," Ed Crane, of the libertarian Cato Institute, said.

When I asked Weyrich about this, he agreed that Gingrich is not a "philosophically grounded conservative," and went on to say, "He is what I call an experiential conservative. He is conservative not because of Biblical beliefs or philosophical readings but because of his experience in bumping up against the welfare state and finding it wanting." Weyrich added that early on "he flaked on abortion votes. He didn't have real conviction on the issue. I complained to him. I said, 'I want you to read some things.' He came back to me almost shaking, saying, 'You can count on my pro-life position! One of these radical feminists got me in a corner and started sticking her finger in my eye—and if that's what they're about I'm on the other side!' "

Weyrich added that, since Gingrich is an "experiential" conservative, he is apt to decide that a position is a liability and simply change it. "For example, initially he was ambiguous on trade. Then Roger Milliken"—the textile industrialist—"got hold of him, and he became protectionist and voted for the textile industry. But the big money is with the free-traders, not the protectionists, and he changed his position, given his ambition—where he wanted to go." It was the support of big multinationals that Gingrich had gained with his free-trade position, Weyrich noted.

There were many times, Weyrich said, when his fellow conservative activists would "call and scream at me" for things Gingrich had done. But Weyrich would attempt to calm them by saying, "He is furthering the agenda we have all sought—but it's not for philosophical reasons."

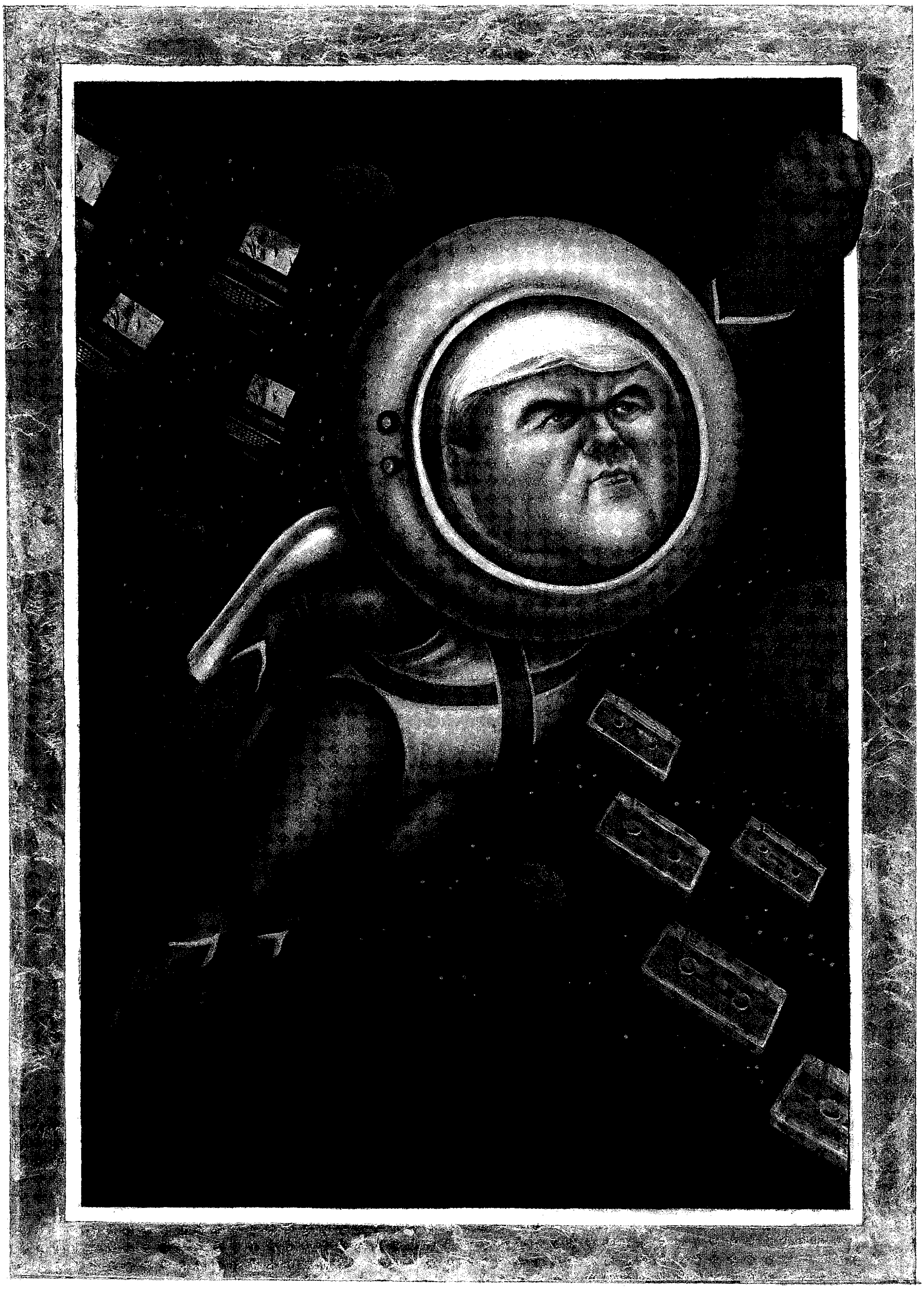
II—YOU HAVE TO BE FLUID

WHILE Gingrich was developing the oratorical ability and the message that would enable him to build and lead a movement, he was also working on strategic alliances. Gingrich began his assiduous cultivation of the military in his earliest days in Congress. "In '79," Gingrich told me, "I went to see Shy Meyer"—General Edward C. Meyer, who was Chief of Staff of the Army—"and I said, 'Look, I want to be a permanent student and intellectual ally of the military. I won't serve in the armed services and I won't deal with day-to-day problems, but I'd like to help over the long run.' " Meyer, Gingrich said, "took me very seriously—he was the most intellectual chief of staff in the modern Army." They agreed that Gingrich would teach a course, and he has continued to do so at various military colleges ever since.

Gingrich appears to have made the same calculation that others trying to build political movements have made; namely, that it would be helpful to be allied with a powerful institution of the state. He has made it a priority to establish vast personal contacts within the military. In the past decade or so, he told me, he has talked to every active-duty officer who has become an admiral or a general. (He has been able to do this because he teaches the required capstone course.) And Frank Gregorsky, who was on Gingrich's congressional staff at the time and was his chief of staff from 1981 to 1983, said, "Newt arranged in 1981 to get routinely invited to give the address to new officers at Fort Leavenworth. It was training, it was exposure, it was also a way to create a network—like Churchill had all these 'spies' in the government—so Newt would know these guys and could call them."

During these early years in Congress, some staff members who had known Gingrich before he made it to Washington thought he had grown noticeably more grandiose. "His pomposity and self-aggrandizement are pretty hard to take," one said. "It wasn't *quite* 'You are so lucky to be living in the same century as I am,' but it was close." He was receiving far more attention than ever before, but his need for attention seemed unabated. He complained to staff members that he had good ideas at night and there was no one there to take them down. One staff person gave him a tape recorder. He would use it sometimes in the office, this person recalled, but he would prefer that a staff person sit next to him, holding it and listening as he spoke.

Gregorsky said that when he exhorted his boss to "be more philosophically co-



Even Gingrich loyalists balked at his suggestion that the United States become "the first Third Wave nation."

herent" Gingrich would respond, "Those are the breaks, Frank. Saving civilization is hard. You have to be fluid." Feeling that his failure to grasp Gingrich's thinking might be due to his own inadequacy, Gregorsky at one point asked him to suggest some helpful reading. Among Gingrich's suggestions was the "Foundation Trilogy," by the science-fiction writer Isaac Asimov—three epic novels about the rise and fall of an interstellar civilization. After he read the books, Gregorsky went back to Gingrich and told him they were interesting but didn't help him to understand Gingrich's political philosophy, whereupon Gingrich said, "I think of things in one-hundred-year increments, so I wanted you to read Asimov, because that conveys the course of civilization over five hundred years—and that's how I think."

Most of his colleagues were not impressed by Gingrich's virtuosity. He had no interest in legislating, and he made it plain from the moment he arrived in the House that he was wholly intent on destroying the current system and bringing about the Republican takeover of the House. "This place is awful. We've got to blow it up!" Pierre (Pete) du Pont, the former governor of Delaware, recalled Gingrich telling him when they met, in the early eighties. Gingrich had by then acquired the nickname Neutron, and some associates continue to use it to this day. He did, of course, found the Conservative Opportunity Society with a small band of colleagues, and they achieved some notice when, in 1984, they began making frequent speeches on C-SPAN. But they were shunned by many members—especially the more senior ones. The former Republican representative Bill Frenzel, a widely respected legislator, said recently, "C.O.S. was not my cup of tea. It seemed to me to be a bunch of defrocked generals plotting to take over the world from a position on the extreme. They had this idea, Liberal Welfare State/Conservative Opportunity Society. I didn't think it was worth chewing on, and I went back to legislating."

Richard Cheney, who had been the White House Chief of Staff under President Gerald Ford, was elected to Congress in 1978, the same year as Gingrich. Cheney, a conservative, rather than go himself, sent his administrative assistant, David Gribbin, to the weekly C.O.S. meetings. "Newt had so many subliminal detractors who saw him as a combination of arrogant and crazy," Gribbin recalled. "But he persevered. *No one else* in Congress was told 'No' so many times. 'Shut up, Newt—if you say that again I'll gag!' And Newt would wake up the next day refreshed and ready to go."

Those who regarded Gingrich as a mere clown were, of course, greatly underestimating him. In his dealings with colleagues he could be both brutal and captivating, as his experiences with two members of the Molinari family, of Staten Island, illustrate. The former Republican representative Guy Molinari and Gingrich were assigned to the Public Works and Transportation Committee. After two years, Molinari was offered the ranking position for the minority on the Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee, which had a very rich history as an investigating committee. Molinari, a combative former prosecutor, saw it as a great opportunity, but he didn't want to undertake an assignment so big and demanding only to be bumped in a couple of years. In 1983, he went to Gingrich, who was senior to him, and explained his position. "He said, 'No, you don't have a problem.' "

Molinari asked him to confirm the understanding in writing, because, he explained, he did not want to risk Gingrich's not remembering their agreement after a few years had passed, and Gingrich did confirm it.

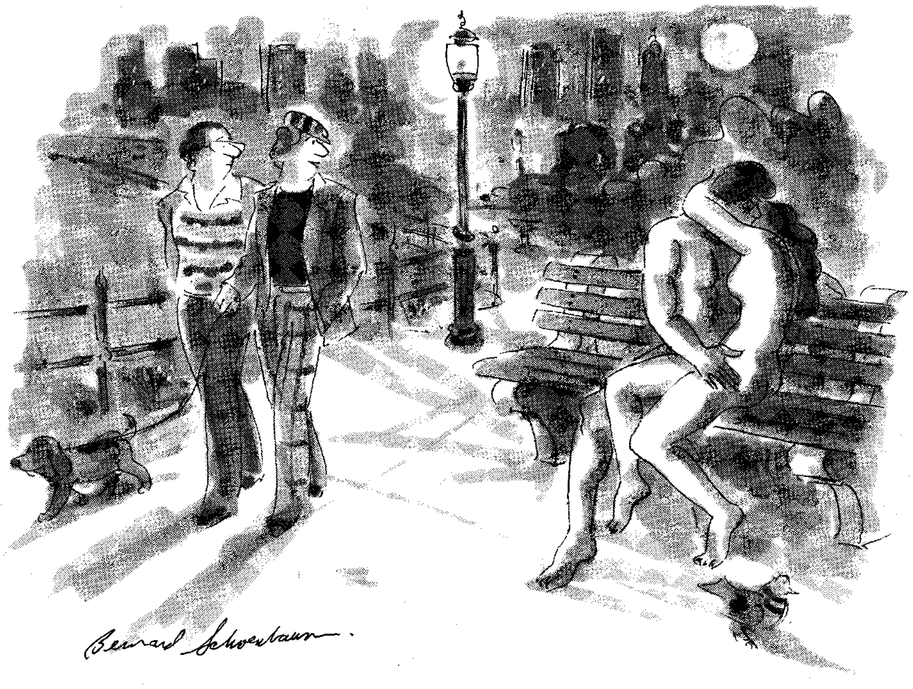
As it turned out, Molinari helped lead the committee in a number of bipartisan investigations, including one of aviation safety. "I was bringing a lot of heat on the airline industry," he told me last spring, "and Delta's hub was in Atlanta."

In early 1985, Molinari was told by the subcommittee staff that they had heard that Delta was applying pressure to Gingrich to bump him. Delta's hub airport was in Gingrich's district, and one of his daughters, who was in college, had a summer job with Delta. There was "a series of things I was advocating to improve aviation safety, so I was not popular with the carriers," Molinari said. "The industry was very upset."

Shortly after being warned by the staff, he received a call from Gingrich. "He said, 'I'm going to have to bump you.' I said, 'How can you do this? We have an agreement in writing.' He said, 'We do?' "

Molinari dug the letters they had exchanged out of his files. "I believed that if I refreshed his memory he wouldn't go ahead," he said. But Gingrich was undeterred. He bumped Molinari and became the ranking Republican member, and the subcommittee became relatively inactive. Its pressure on the airline industry ceased.

Not long after this episode, Molinari was in his House office, with his TV tuned to C-SPAN. "Gingrich was on TV



"Another case of life imitating art."

MISSING

That afternoon, midwinter, yawn
of gloom and damp,
lapsed—collapsed

five and a half hours
into a three-mile walk

and the star
who stepped as light as a dance,
Annie the walker,

shot into the void a self
no bigger than a pellet—

Annie, where
were you, where?
Mother and brother

called into the wind
the sound

of her name, they searched
the night's ditches,

four dark pubs, three dark churches,

two village halls, the better hotel,
the bank-top tearoom
shut up after Christmas,

the simple necessary road
empty, no good

to her, oblivious
under the porch light
on the remote ridge farm,

hair dripping under her cap,
clothes wet black,

boots clogged with mysterious mud,
across her face recognition
drifting, alien, diffident, glad.

—MAIRI MACINNES

condemning Democrats for having missed a crucial vote," he recalled. "I said, 'Wait a minute! I remember that vote—and he wasn't there!' " Molinari checked the *Congressional Record*, and raced to the floor. "I asked, 'Will the gentleman from Georgia yield?' " Then, Molinari recalled, he said, "I was interested in your criticism of the Democratic members who missed that vote, but I'm confused—I have a copy of the *Congressional Record* for that day, and it appears that *you* missed the vote yourself!"

Gingrich called him over, Molinari told me, and said he was surprised that Molinari had done that, because he thought the matter was "resolved."

"Resolved?" Molinari countered indignantly. "You bumped me, and we had an agreement!"

After he lost the ability to set the agenda at a subcommittee such as Investigations and Oversight, Molinari went on to say, it was never the same for him in Congress. He decided to run for Staten Island Borough President in 1989, and his daughter, Susan Molinari, took over his seat after a special election in March, 1990. She was courted by Gingrich, and she has become a member of the Republican leadership and a devout Gingrich loyalist. (At a recent fundraising meeting, she referred to him as "a model of courage.") "Susan is one of his staunchest defenders," Molinari said. "Usually, in the past, if she felt her father had been wronged politically she would jump in on my side. But here, no. But she's her own person," he added, smiling wanly, "and I wouldn't have it any other way."

Gingrich's lambasting of his Democratic colleagues for doing the very same thing he had done (and assuming, apparently, that he would get away with it) was a gambit he would use successfully, again and again, over the coming years. Gingrich's operative principle in such maneuvers seems to be one that Michael Johnson, who was chief of staff to the former Republican Minority Leader Robert Michel, and who in many ways admires Gingrich, has described this way: "What Newt excelled at was the politics of perception: it does not matter what happened on the floor of the House on any day—if you can describe it your way, *you* define it. He made the politics of perception into an art form."

GINGRICH had got off to a promising start, and had even acquired what Weyrich referred to as "a cult following" of right-wing supporters outside Congress during his first two terms; but Weyrich—who had, in effect, chosen Gingrich as the horse for his movement to ride—was afraid he would come to nothing. Gingrich would attend meetings and generate a lot of excitement, and people from right-wing think tanks like the Heritage Foundation and the Cato Institute would do projects for him, but when they brought the finished product back to him "he'd be uninterested, on to three other things," Weyrich said. "He had a short attention span—he'd be off here, off there. After he'd done this a couple times, he had spent his political capital. I said, 'Newt, you are in danger of becoming a joke! You go to these meetings, you throw stuff up in the air—soon, people won't attend your meetings.' He said, 'How can I be taken seriously?' 'You've expressed in your campaigns a great interest in corruption,' I said. 'Other Republicans don't have the stomach for it. Take some of these people on and *beat* them! That way you will be taken seriously.' "

In 1983, not long after their conversation, Gingrich launched his attack on Representatives Daniel Crane and Gerry Studds, arguing that they should be expelled for having had affairs with House pages. ("A free country must have honest leaders if it is to remain free," he declared.) The next few years apparently offered him no viable targets. Then, in 1987, in his biggest gamble yet, Gingrich went after Democratic Speaker Jim Wright, charging him with improprieties in personal investments and in a book deal with an unusually high royalty. "If he had failed, Wright would have driven him into obscurity," Weyrich said. Recalling Gingrich's preparation, Weyrich, who coördinated Gingrich's media operation in that attack, said, "He went through rehearsals, he had people sitting around who were good interrogators, he was as prepared as for a Supreme Court argument."

Ultimately, when the House Ethics Committee, in April of 1989, accused Wright of violating House rules on the acceptance of gifts and outside income, all but one of the charges were based not on the allegations Gingrich had made but on the work of a special counsel, Richard Phelan, who had conducted a six-and-a-half-month probe, with an eight-member staff, at a cost of more than a

"Have a seat, meatball."

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million dollars. Gingrich had acknowledged, after filing his complaint, that there were errors and gaps in it, and he told Jeff Gerth, of the *Times*, that he had included two out of the four counts "out of curiosity," and that he did not "expect them to be actionable items." But he argued that a full investigation was required because of Wright's position as Speaker of the House; that it had to be undertaken by an outside counsel; that he be given complete autonomy; and that it was vital that its scope not be restricted. "The rules normally applied by the Ethics Committee to an investigation of a typical Member are insufficient in an investigation of the Speaker of the House," Gingrich declared. "Clearly, this investigation has to meet a higher standard of public accountability and integrity." While Wright's resignation did not benefit Republicans in any direct way—and, many felt, it had done great damage to the House as an institution and to the relations between the two parties—it had clearly transformed Gingrich. As Weyrich said, "Once he took on Wright, he became a serious figure."

No sooner had Wright resigned and Tom Foley, another Democrat, assumed the Speakership than Gingrich's aide Karen Van Brocklin was identified as having called reporters to spread the rumor that Foley, who had been married for more than twenty years, was homosexual and had been involved with young boys. Many of Gingrich's Republican colleagues were aghast ("I thought that was horrid," Bill Frenzel said) and felt she should be fired. Gingrich refused—because to him, one of his closest allies said, it was "essentially a minor transgression."

It was Weyrich who, however fortuitously, provided Gingrich with his next crucial stepping stone to the Speakership. Weyrich publicly attacked President Bush's nominee for Secretary of Defense, John Tower, alleging drunkenness and extramarital activities, and Bush thereupon nominated Cheney, who was Minority Whip and thus the heir presumptive to Bob Michel. That left the way open for Gingrich to become Minority Whip, and within an hour of the announcement of Cheney's elevation Gingrich was campaigning furiously. This decision took even his closest allies in Congress by surprise. He had been seen as, in the words of one associate, "a chronic destabilizer," congenitally unsuited to a leadership job, and apparently uninterested in one. Not one of a dozen House members I spoke with could recall his ever expressing any desire to be Speaker. "The younger members would have steered clear of him if they'd thought Newt was out to become Speaker," I was told by one of Gingrich's fellow C.O.S. members from those early days. It was a strange dichotomy, however, since supporters on the outside had been hearing about his ambitions for at least fifteen years. On the subject of Gingrich's becoming Speaker, Terry Kohler declared, "It was not a question of 'if' but only 'when.'" John Grunden, who has been a supporter ever since he was Gingrich's finance chairman in the 1976 campaign, got a phone call within an hour of the victory in the Whip race. "Grunden," the new Whip said, "one down, one to go."

It had been a close call. Gingrich had succeeded in engaging many moderates, who were weary of being an oppressed minority and believed—after his triumph over Wright—that he could successfully challenge the status quo. But he was widely disliked, even on his side of the aisle: he was considered too scatterbrained for the job and was thought dangerous by some. He won by only two votes. To become Speaker, he would have to build a more solid constituency. His solution was radical: not to woo the existing membership but to bring in a new contingent of representatives, who would owe fealty to him. For years, Gingrich had hoped that the National Republican Congressional Committee (N.R.C.C.), through, among other things, a more aggressive funding of challengers, could help make the Republican Party the majority. Gingrich was "always pushing," recalled Guy Vander Jagt, a former head of the N.R.C.C., "and I would say, 'Newt! We can't do those things. We're limited to giving five thousand dollars in a race'"—to a congressional candidate. "What he wanted went way beyond the capacity or legal ability of the N.R.C.C."

What might be called the Dick Cheney factor came to Gingrich's rescue again. Cheney turned down an invitation from Pete du Pont to be chairman of an organization du Pont had founded in 1979 to fund a "farm team" of Republican candidates at the state level who would then be available to run for higher office. This was GOPAC. Du Pont offered the position to Gingrich, and he jumped at it. He saw how he could transform du Pont's worthy committee into a high-powered vehicle that, with him at the controls, could soar over the restrictions imposed upon the N.R.C.C.

As a federal party committee, the N.R.C.C. was, of course, subject to federal election laws, which impose limits on contributions to federal campaigns and also mandate full disclosure of the identities of contributors and of all money received and spent. The beauty of GOPAC was that it was not a federal committee, and so was not subject to those restrictions; it could operate essentially outside the radar screen of public scrutiny.

As soon as Gingrich got hold of GOPAC, he set about transforming it, and found a way to indirectly support potential federal candidates. Gingrich wrote to a prospective contributor in 1986 that "GOPAC's program now is to build Party strength and groom promising future congressional candidates. . . . It is our job to help the Party become competitive in the additional districts it will take to allow us to capture a majority in the U.S. House—some 50 in all. . . . At present, we are active in 22 Congressional districts."

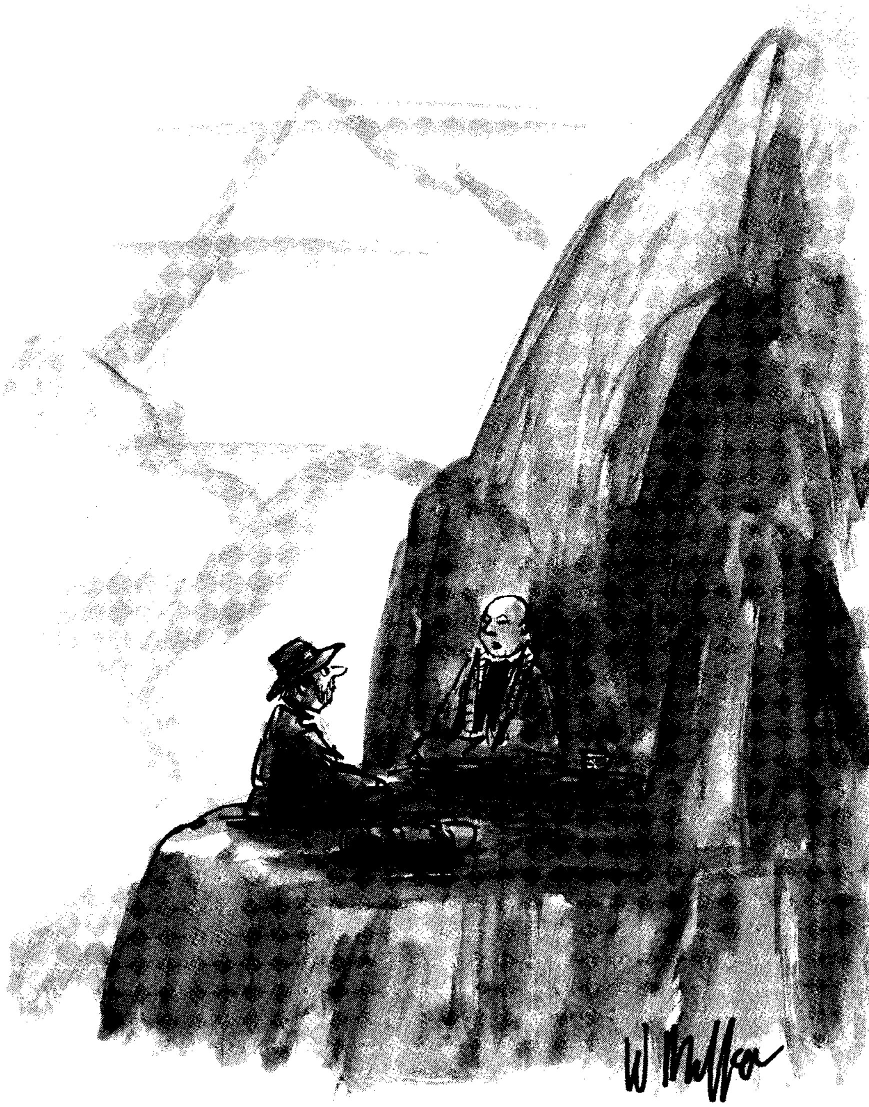
In the spring of 1991, the Federal Election Commission would initiate an investigation of GOPAC, on the ground that it had failed to register as a federal political-action commitee, or PAC, while engaging in activities to influence federal elections from 1989 to 1990 (and the F.E.C. has since filed a complaint in United States District Court). On May 8th, the day after being informed of the F.E.C.'s initial "reason to believe" finding, GOPAC did create a federal PAC. In subsequent reporting periods, it has disclosed roughly ten per cent of its activities as federal. Thus, about ninety per cent of the funds that flow into GOPAC are not subject to federal limits.

Under Gingrich, GOPAC was ideologically driven, functioning as a research shop to develop a message and establish a communications system to distribute that message. Howard (Bo) Callaway, who was GOPAC's chairman from 1986 to 1993, told me, "In Pete's GOPAC, there was very little ideology: all Republicans are good Republicans—the only question is 'Who can win?' But Newt was saying, 'Here's the ideology you sell, here are the issues you can win on.' "

In a sense, Gingrich was acting as an entrepreneur, but one who was bent on a political goal—creating a Republican majority. And the ideology was developed like any commercial product, through market research to determine what customers wanted. GOPAC, therefore, commissioned research testing, issues polling, and focus groups. Once ideas were produced, Gingrich was their principal salesman. He gave thousands of speeches, of course, but GOPAC also produced and distributed videotapes (played at GOPAC sessions for the training of candidates) and—most important, as it turned out—audiotapes of Gingrich. "What else are you going to do? You can't *clone* him!" said Terry Kohler, who worked on the early tapings.

Kohler, one of GOPAC's largest supporters over the years (he and his wife, Mary, have contributed more than seven hundred thousand dollars to it), is a man of extreme views. After losing the 1982 Wisconsin governor's race, he accused his rival of appointing "queers." He also said that he did not think blacks in South Africa should be given the vote. (He subsequently apologized.) Kohler became mesmerized by Gingrich when he and Mary, who is also a longtime grassroots activist, visited Gingrich in his congressional office in 1984. He told them about Verdun. "Mary and I walked out of Newt's office convinced that he was the only one who could rescue Western civilization," Kohler told me. What had persuaded him of that, he explained, was Gingrich's "ability to take an issue, rotate it in three-dimensional space, and, in the process of doing that, change the character of the debate." As an illustration of Gingrich's talent, he cited the issue of Aid to Families with Dependent Children. "Because of the way he has framed the debate, the issue is no longer taking food out of children's mouths but entrapping women in poverty, because of economic incentives that cause them to keep the father of their children *away* from them," Kohler said, adding, with a satisfied air, "Today, the debate is about fatherhood."

Part of Gingrich's appeal, however, was far more primitive. As Kohler describes it, "He walks into a room, says, 'I need three people to run,' and they walk

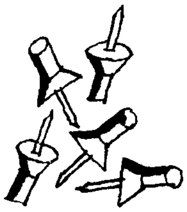


"Of course, that's just my opinion. Richard Gere's views may be somewhat different."

out of the crowd, saying 'What should we do?' with this glassy-eyed stare."

One of the GOPAC videotapes, from 1988, is entitled "We Are a Majority." (Gingrich has been attempting to retrieve copies of tapes and memos from his pre-Speaker days for an archive at West Georgia which he controls all access to, but he has not been able to collect them all.) In several respects, this tape is quintessential, unadulterated Gingrich. It is an illustration of his belief in the politics of perception—that if he can define a situation so that enough people believe it is real, it will *be* real. Thus, he argues that there is an "American paradox," because the majority in America is "center right" (as manifested in Presidential elections since 1968) and yet "the left-wing minority" governs (in Congress). "We must think and act like a majority!" he exhorts.

The tape exemplifies, too, the polarization and oversimplification that are his signature. "*We* believe in the importance and the power of the individual," while "the left believes that individuals are flawed and fundamentally can be cared for only by government," he says. It offers an example of his propensity for projection, as when he applies to his opponent those words that best describe himself. He often seems to do this as a preëmptive strike, so that if an opponent seeks to apply the word to him it will sound merely imitative. "The chameleon is the modern symbol of the Democratic Party," Gingrich declares.



And the tape also illustrates the loaded use of cultural issues, which Gingrich began emphasizing in the eighties. Fred Steeper, who has been polling for him ever since his first congressional race, in 1974, told me that the premise in the seventies was that smaller government was what resonated with conservatives but that by the early eighties crime and welfare—"cultural values"—had emerged strongly, and "Newt began concentrating on those then."

Gingrich's skilled use of language—sometimes directly, sometimes in code words—to stir specific sentiments is evident on the tape: Language is important, he instructed the group of candidates he was addressing. "Notice the power of the word 'gay' versus the word 'homosexual,' and notice how it changes the whole dynamic of the discussion." He also said, "Where *we* believe in the importance and power of the traditional family, the left . . . feels relatively comfortable talking about homosexual couples adopting children."

And, in a more oblique but equally effective use of language, he told an anecdote about having met with some constituents in his district who were renting apartments to Lao refugees. He went to the meeting expecting to hear complaints about these immigrants, he said, but instead heard this from the landlords: "They take two jobs. They go out and work hard. They don't drink. They don't cut each other on Saturday nights. They are very, very good about their apartment." He then explained what concerned these landlords: The Lao "would learn to be normal welfare Americans. They quit their jobs. They start cheating on the rent. They start fighting on Saturday night. They break up their family. Their kids wouldn't do their homework." Gingrich summed up his recounting of what these people had told him: " 'Our major concern is the foreigners will learn how to be American.' "

The line between racism and the resentment that an economically stressed middle class feels toward the poor on welfare has become increasingly blurred in recent years; however indistinct its true wellspring, there is certainly a great deal of anger to tap. A Republican strategist who has worked closely with Gingrich said, "Newt grasped the essential cultural revolt. Middle-class people are not against rich people—they're against funding poor people. People are sick and tired of people of color having illegitimate kids and spending money on drugs and creating crime." Or, as Morris Shechtman, a psychologist turned business consultant who has held seminars for House Republicans at Gingrich's invitation (Gingrich put Shechtman's book "Working Without a Net" on his recommended-reading list immediately after becoming Speaker), told me, spitting his words and gesturing angrily at his chin, "The middle class has had it up to *here* with the arrogance of the poor and the disenfranchised."

The GOPAC videotapes were useful to Gingrich. So was a word list that GOPAC distributed to teach candidates how to "speak like Newt." (Words that were used to define Democrats included "sick," "traitors," "corrupt," "bizarre," "cheat," "steal," "devour," "self-serving," and "criminal rights.") GOPAC distributed its audiotapes to candidates who in their long car drives across their states would listen for hours to Gingrich's blend of political evangelism and message. This was the beginning of a communications network that Gingrich and his GOPAC allies had envisaged—one that would, in Kohler's words, "*punch through* the establishment media."

In the summer of 1989, after Gingrich won the Whip race, he had held a two-week retreat at the GOPAC chairman Bo Callaway's rustic North Pole Basin hideaway, high in the Colorado Rockies, receiving groups of big GOPAC donors, some of his congressional allies, and Republican consultants, in rotating shifts. One of those consultants, Edward Rollins, said, "North Pole was a six-year planning session. The plan was to create a revolution, with candidates across the country all spouting the same stuff."

"Newt started with the premise that in any war whoever controls the means of communication always has the upper hand," Weyrich said. The audiotapes would be complemented by weekly conference calls with Gingrich, who told candidates the issues of that day in Congress, and what they should say about them. Eddie Mahe, a veteran Republican consultant who has worked closely with Gingrich for more than fifteen years, and who also attended the North Pole retreat, told me, "Newt defined what the race was all about for these candidates, so they were saying the same thing all over the country. So you had the press hearing the same thing from many sources, and that was important—it made it harder for the press to shoot any one individual. Newt could influence ten thousand people around the country to say what he wanted, and to say it in a given week."

Roger Wicker, the president of this year's freshman class in the House, listened to Gingrich tapes when he ran for state senator in Mississippi in 1987, and he became a believer then; today he breathlessly compares Gingrich to Winston Churchill. Senator Rick Santorum, of Pennsylvania, who was elected to the House in 1990 and to the Senate in 1994, told me, "I listened to those tapes all the time driving around in the car. They taught tactics you should use, basic philosophy, how to discuss the issues. I was a *disciple*."

Weyrich said, "Many members have told me, 'Until I heard Newt explain this, I never understood the context of my beliefs. I knew, of course, what I believed in—but I didn't understand the *crusade* we are involved in!' "

As more of these adherents were elected to the House, Gingrich grew more assured of winning the Speakership, and of leading a group of people who, as his longtime ally Representative Robert Walker said, "have come to Congress embracing ideas he espoused in the first place." Walker pointed out, too, something that others close to Gingrich acknowledge: "Some would say GOPAC was a leadership PAC." Leadership PACs allow legislators to accept contributions larger than the ones they could accept for their own campaigns, and that money can be used primarily as donations to other campaigns, or to finance travel around the country to campaign for other candidates in state and federal elections. For federal elections, everything, of course, has to be fully disclosed, in accordance with federal campaign-finance laws. However, by using GOPAC as his leadership PAC—to build a following among candidates—in the years when it was not a federally registered committee, Gingrich was able to circumvent both the incoming-contribution limits and the disclosure requirements that a more typical leadership PAC would have imposed.

Through this system, Gingrich's power was growing far beyond the confines of Congress. Walker told me, "Republican state legislators across the country . . . in drives back and forth across their states have been listening to Newt's tapes for nearly a decade. They have become whips, leaders, committee chairmen, and even speakers." And, Walker added, "It is a network prepared to listen to what they perceive to be marching orders."

"Note the small zipper pocket of your sales kit. It contains a cyanide capsule."

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III—THE APPARATUS

By the early nineties, the vast, complex apparatus that Gingrich was constructing—an apparatus that could propel him (without going through the crucible of a national election) to the office he considered more powerful than the Presidency—had one potentially fatal flaw: it was all resting on an incommensurately small and insecure base. In a sense, this was at once the genius and the Achilles' heel of Gingrich's plan. All he had to do was to be reëlected in his Georgia district term after term and meanwhile recruit his own army in the House to elect him Speaker. It was remarkable, really, that such a small popular vote could pave the way to such power.

By 1990, however, even that small vote had become problematic for Gingrich. He barely won reëlection. To count on holding on to his seat in 1992, he would have to spend valuable time in Georgia cultivating his constituents instead of travelling across the country to get his followers elected to the House.

That was bad enough. But another complication loomed. Georgia's voting districts had to be reconfigured according to the 1990 census. What would happen to Gingrich's already slim majority—and the chances of his fellow Republican candidates for the House—when the voting maps were redrawn by a state legislature that was controlled by Democrats? Salvation was at hand in the Voting Rights Act, a law originally designed to insure fair representation for blacks. In 1990, the state had ten congressmen, nine Democrats and Gingrich, but only one of the Democrats was black. Black Democrats and Republicans had a common interest in a map redrawn to create ghettoized black districts. The blacks would get more seats, but the "bleached" surrounding districts would be winnable by Republicans, a fact not likely to displease the Bush Justice Department, which had to approve the redistricting plan.

Of course, monitoring and countering the maps redrawn by the Democrats required vigilance and resources, and Gingrich's longtime archenemy Tom Murphy, Georgia's House Speaker and a Democrat, made no secret of his desire to do Gingrich harm in the redrawing. But Murphy played into Gingrich's hands, with not a little covert assistance from Gingrich himself. The map that finally emerged of Gingrich's district was so skewed against him that he was able to cry foul and portray himself as having been victimized by a vindictive Murphy. Gingrich had the perfect excuse to move, while assuming the aggrieved public posture necessary to vitiate charges of carpetbagging, and it just happened that what his allies refer to as "a dream Republican district" had been created, north of Atlanta.

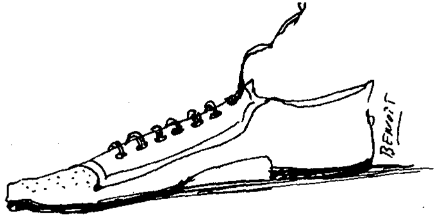
John Grunden told me that the redistricting and the opportunity it afforded Gingrich were critical for realizing his ambition for the Speakership—"after that, he was free to campaign across the country." Tom Phillips, then the Georgia Senate Minority Leader, recalled that the night the map was finally accepted by the legislature, "Newt said, 'They've destroyed the old Six, and now where's the new Six?' " Phillips chortled and added, "Like he didn't know." Phillips went on with a grin, "You know the story of Br'er Rabbit and the briar patch. Tom Murphy was the sly old fox, and Newt Br'er Rabbit. Newt just waited to see what Murphy would do, and then said, 'Don't throw me in that briar patch!' "

How Gingrich was able to come by the near-perfect result owes something to GOPAC, his all-purpose vehicle. Representative John Linder, a Georgia Republican, told me that GOPAC had funded the computers and the software for the redistricting. "Without them," Tom Phillips said, "we would not have been able to compete, to come up with our own maps." And Thomas Hofeller, a demographics consultant who worked on redistricting across the country for the N.R.C.C., said, "GOPAC and Gingrich were helping to fund and direct funds to people working on redistricting in his state." He said he believed that funds may have been donated to the state Party to pay for the equipment. Gingrich had his aide Mel Steely on site, and, according to Don Hill, the Georgia Republicans' computer consultant, Gingrich and his close adviser Joe Gaylord took part in numerous strategy sessions with Hill. When I asked Gingrich about GOPAC's role in redistricting, he replied, referring to Gaylord, "Joe does some of that. It's not something I pay attention to." I expressed my surprise at his response, and he added, "They"—meaning GOPAC—"may have had a role, but it's not a role I had anything to do with. The only part of GOPAC I worried about was the training part."

From Gingrich's standpoint, the less that is known about GOPAC's involvement in the Georgia redistricting, the better. Its having been active in an area of such deep significance to Gingrich personally lends support to the notion that GOPAC functions as his political vehicle. Then there is the embarrassment about the use of the Voting Rights Act. Gingrich has opposed affirmative action for years, on the ground that he does not believe in race-based quotas. To have helped engineer the blatantly racial gerrymandering that took place in Georgia is the very definition of hypocrisy. (It is interesting to note that in his "We Are a Majority" tape Gingrich provides an answer to how liberal Democrats, if they are indeed a minority, have managed to win a majority in Congress for so long: "Where possible by gerrymandering, by rigging the rules . . . and when necessary, which is every day, simply lie!")

Today, Georgia's delegation to the House consists of three Democrats (all of whom are black and from black-majority districts) and eight Republicans. What might have been a handicap was turned into a bonanza, although, in the litigation that followed, the Supreme Court found last June that the defendants had carried out a racial gerrymander and remanded the decision to the lower court for the map to be redrawn again. Gingrich's seat is considered unlikely to be substantially affected.

Good as the outcome had been for him, it was, of course, susceptible to the normal vicissitudes of political life. Pierre Laurent recalled that Gingrich said as much when they discussed the situation at the time. "He said he had been involved in the redrawing—but, even so, it was not perfect. He said, 'You can never be *absolutely* sure. These upper-class people in this new district—you can't tell what they're going to do.' " Indeed, Gingrich came very close to losing in the 1992 primary, where he was attacked as a carpetbagger and an opportunist, but by the time of the election he had established himself with his new, rock-solid Republican constituents, and he had an easy victory, as he did again in 1994.



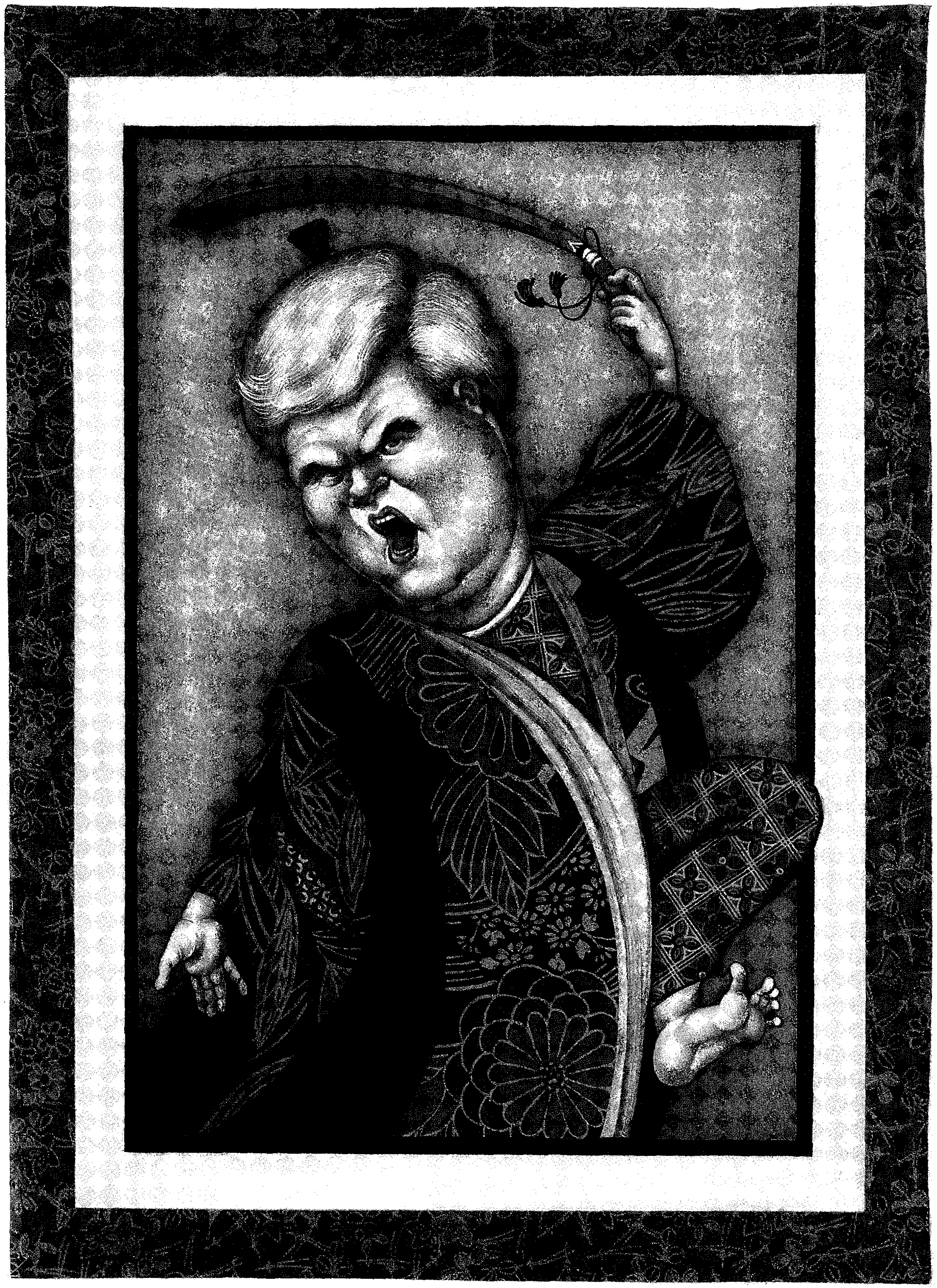
In October of 1991, shortly after Gingrich announced that he was going to move in order to run for a newly created seat in upscale Cobb County, he told David Goldberg, of the Atlanta *Journal & Constitution*, in an interview, "I got up before a luncheon in Carrollton today to talk about what Georgia House Speaker Tom Murphy did to my district, and I literally just choked up. Because regardless of whether I ran in the new 3rd [his old district] or the 6th, I wouldn't be representing those people anymore. It's a tremendous agony to see people and relationships and friendships that are 20 years old and to see what Murphy has done and to be powerless about it."

Goldberg pointed out that the new Third included a large part of Gingrich's old district, and wondered if he might have kept a lot of the relationships he so valued and run there, and later in the interview Goldberg said, "Some of your critics in the current 6th District say your decision to move proves what they have said about you, that you are a political opportunist who has claimed loyalty to this region, but that as soon as you had opportunity to go to an area that was more homogeneous, suburban, and Republican, you left. What do you say to those folks?"

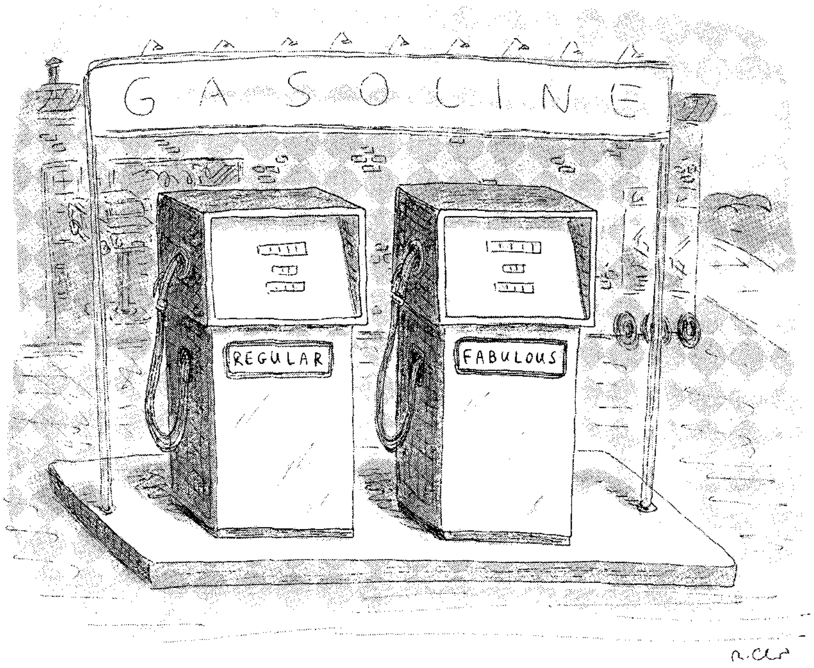
"I say I'm surprised they are that ignorant of the reapportionment process," Gingrich replied. "We spent four months trying to work with the Legislature to create a south metro district that kept the airport intact. I spoke out publicly for it, I did everything I could to get it. Now, they have to think I'm amazingly clever to have publicly fought for a south metro district but manipulated Murphy into destroying it so I could go to the new 6th."

Gingrich went on, "It's just not true, and I frankly resent that kind of cynicism. People who think that ought to go off and be cynical on their own. Some people cover politics too long and they begin to resemble Ted Kennedy in their cynicism."

By early 1994, Gingrich was finally positioned to command the offensive he had been planning for more than a decade. Becoming Whip in '89 had given him the legitimacy he needed to begin exerting control within the Republican Party, and it had vastly increased his



James Clavell's "Shōgun" had a powerful influence on Gingrich. The book is a narrative of a quest for absolute power.



ability to dispense patronage, drawing into his ambit many House members who would otherwise have been difficult for him to cultivate. Before the '92 election, Gingrich is said to have told the longtime Minority Leader, Robert Michel—a principled, collegial man, who was portrayed by Gingrich's troops as essentially a collaborator—"You can go for one more term, but after that I'm taking you out." The '92 freshman class of forty-six new Republican representatives consisted largely of fervent Gingrich followers—thereby solidifying Gingrich's ability to make good on his threat—and in the fall of '93 Michel announced that he would not run for reëlection.

As the presumptive Minority Leader, Gingrich began using his newfound authority to modify the behavior of his fellow-members. He had long chafed at the fact that most of them had concentrated on raising money for their own campaigns, and had also got funds from the N.R.C.C., but that little had been done for open-seat challengers. Now, to those members who, under the seniority system (which was still sacrosanct), would expect to become committee chairmen if the Republicans finally succeeded in winning a majority, Gingrich sent handwritten notes. He informed them that as Speaker he would be allotting chairmanships based *not* solely on seniority but, at least in part, on how much money a member had contributed to challengers' races. Standards were set for all members. They were expected to raise money for their own campaigns; for direct contributions to challengers; for the N.R.C.C.'s incumbent-protection fund (directed only to those in trouble); and for the N.R.C.C. fund for challengers. Gay Hart Gaines, the chairman of GOPAC, pointed to the potency of Gingrich's ultimatum, saying, "In '92, six members contributed to challengers' races; in '94, a hundred and two did."

For those who played by Gingrich's new rules, there was the potential for ample rewards—not only rewards he would dispense, like chairmanships, but also, for those who aspired to leadership, the likelihood of election to a leadership position through the votes of new and grateful members. Virtually all the members of the Republican House leadership today followed Gingrich's dictates, contributing heavily to challengers, who, in turn, helped to elect them to their new positions. One who bucked the system was Representative Robert Walker. Because he opposed it on principle, he made relatively minor contributions, and thereby lost his race for Whip to Representative Tom DeLay, a heavy giver. It was a particularly telling result, because Walker, whom Gingrich had made Chief Deputy Whip in 1989, had essentially functioned as de-facto Whip (while Gingrich busied himself with strategizing and campaigning across the country) and had done an outstanding job. Tom DeLay spent nearly three hundred thousand dollars through his leadership PAC, and also made fund-raising appearances for other candidates. "He won the votes of so many of the freshmen," Walker commented. "Leadership PACs equal *'I'm giving you this help, I expect your support.'* I think leadership PACs are a perversion of the system."

Now, for the first time, Gingrich was also in a position to commandeer the resources of the N.R.C.C. Guy Vander Jagt, the chairman, had been defeated in his 1992 primary, and Representative Bill Paxon (the husband of Representative Susan Molinari) took his place. Terry Kohler commented to me, "The N.R.C.C. will be a different animal under Newt. It's Paxon who's up there, but it's not Paxon running it." Gingrich's lieutenant Joe Gaylord is said by a couple of people close to him to have orchestrated the activities of GOPAC, the N.R.C.C., and the Republican National Committee in the 1994 House campaign. "He is Newt's gray eminence—the Cardinal Richelieu of GOPAC," one longtime associate of both men observed.

Perhaps what is most striking about GOPAC in the end is how remarkably versatile it has been. It has managed to be whatever Gingrich has wanted it to be, with the emphasis on different places at different times. Several of its members emphasized to me its "seamlessness," and that does appear to be an apt characterization. GOPAC created the message, and continually honed it with issues research. It recruited candidates. It trained them. It told them what to say. By 1991, it was involved in redistricting, coming to the aid of Gingrich in Georgia, and also "maximizing" the election of other Republicans there. It functioned essentially as Gingrich's leadership PAC, enabling him to create his own army of zealous believers.

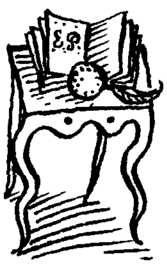
Until 1994, it appears to have done all the above without contributing a great deal of money to challengers' congressional campaigns. A former GOPAC member, Thomas L. (Dusty) Rhodes, who is now the president of the *National Review*, told me that back in 1990—before GOPAC was acknowledging any federal activity at all—candidates would come to GOPAC meetings, and GOPAC members would often send money directly to the candidates as individual contributions. For example, as both Rhodes and Representative Duncan

Hunter told me, Representative Randy (Duke) Cunningham had attended a GOPAC meeting and received contributions for his 1990 campaign. Inasmuch as GOPAC was not a federally registered political committee, these activities were questionable.

GOPAC's filings with the F.E.C. for 1992 and 1994 reflect that it contributed twenty thousand dollars or less to congressional candidates during those years. But in my interviews with Gay Hart Gaines she emphasized how important GOPAC's contributions to candidates had been in 1994. Gaines became chairman, succeeding Bo Callaway, in November of 1993. She is probably Gingrich's most effective booster; she is utterly devoted to him and his cause ("I would lay down my life for Newt Gingrich, in a *heartbeat*, because I think he is so important for this country, and for the world," she told me), and her vivacity draws people of all political persuasions to her. In her first year, she brought in eighty new charter members (such members contribute at least ten thousand dollars); the biggest number in any previous year had been twenty-four. "The money went out *everywhere*, and the money makes such a difference," she continued. Gaines then talked about how GOPAC had helped Representative Jim Nussle ("We gave him thirty-five thousand dollars in the last couple of weeks"); Jim Nalepa, who ran against Representative William Lipinski, and lost; and Representative Ron Lewis, for whom GOPAC had done a TV commercial. (He won in a special election in May of 1994.) Lewis's victory was particularly remarkable. Not long after Lewis's election, Gingrich told listeners in one of his Thursday-night conference calls that Lewis's victory augured a Republican triumph in November, and he stressed that just three weeks before the election—and before GOPAC came to his aid—Lewis had been an unknown in his own district: "He had zero name-recognition." At a GOPAC conference last spring, Lewis was effusive in expressing his gratitude to GOPAC donors. And when I asked him just how GOPAC had helped him, he said, "With money."

In another interview I had with Gaines, she vigorously disputed a point that some had suggested—that GOPAC's impact was achieved mainly through its audiotapes. "GOPAC is *not* just audiotapes!" she declared. "GOPAC did ads in newspapers, commercials on TV. It gave three hundred and twenty thousand dollars to the R.N.C. to distribute to candidates. I would call charter members and say, 'This person is wonderful,' and they would call twenty-five people—that would be twenty-five thousand dollars." She added that Representative Mark Neumann, of Wisconsin, had won by a very small margin, and "he wouldn't have won without us."

Since my conversations with her, Gaines has denied telling me that GOPAC gave thirty-five thousand dollars to Nussle; GOPAC now says that it gave federal candidates only five hundred dollars. A review of the F.E.C. filings of all the candidates Gaines mentioned—Nussle, Nalepa, Lewis, and Neumann—reveals only one GOPAC donation, of five hundred dollars, to Neumann. It is conceivable that Gaines may—in describing the thirty-five thousand dollars that she said GOPAC had given Nussle, for example—have been referring to money she raised by calling GOPAC contributors, who then sent checks directly to the candidate. Such activity may not be illegal, although it does raise questions about organizations like GOPAC, which can report negligible amounts as contributions while taking responsibility for, and wielding the clout afforded by, far greater amounts. GOPAC describes itself as primarily devoted to education and training, with contributions to candidates making up only a fraction of its over-all activity; but if it is *responsible for* infusing hundreds of thousands of dollars into campaigns at critical moments, then its self-description is misleading. Moreover, while GOPAC asserts that it has been disclosing its activities since it created its federal political committee in 1991, it has refused to make any disclosure for the filing periods prior to that, and this is the subject of the F.E.C. lawsuit in federal court. That refusal—now that Gingrich has ascended to the Speakership, and is also eying the Presidency—seems particularly untenable.



Untenable, but also understandable. Gingrich must certainly feel that GOPAC could become a Pandora's box. (In any case, he resigned as general chairman of GOPAC in May, becoming chairman emeritus; he is now associated with a formal leadership PAC.) The questions raised about GOPAC will not be satisfactorily laid to rest until an outside counsel, appointed by the Ethics Committee, gains access to GOPAC's records. After a partisan stalemate of many months, it now appears that the Ethics Committee will do what Gingrich has long opposed (undeterred by his own statements vis-à-vis Wright): appoint an independent counsel, to review at least the charge involving his famous televised college course, and its tax-exempt funding. But the critical issue now is whether that counsel will be given a portfolio that is narrowly defined (as the Republicans on the committee are said to be insisting) or whether it will be the type that Gingrich demanded as essential in the Wright investigation—with the freedom to go wherever the inquiry leads. In the latter case, it will lead, inevitably, to GOPAC.

IV—NORMAN ROCKWELL

FOR someone who has risen to power in large part by launching prosecutorial attacks on others' ethics, Gingrich has been remarkably willing to exploit those gray areas that call into question his own ethics. It seems a kind of displacement, almost, or a willful myopia. And the issue is raised once again (in a further echo of Jim Wright, whose wife was accused of receiving job favors) by Marianne Gingrich, and the job she got last year.

In the seventies, Marianne Gingrich worked for several years on a planning commission in Ohio. Then she went back to school and got a college degree from Georgia State University in the late eighties. During that time, she worked for an Atlanta department store, and in the early nineties she sold cosmetics out of her home for a company called BeautiControl. Then, in September of 1994, she was hired as a consultant by a Jerusalem-based company called the Israel Export Development Company, or I.E.D.C., which is seeking to be chosen by the Israeli government as the concessionaire for a free-trade zone in Israel, and is recruiting businesses to open plants there. She continued working for I.E.D.C. until just recently.

When news of her job broke, in early February of this year, the story went like this: former Representative Vin Weber had been a lobbyist for I.E.D.C.; she had learned about the company through him; she had been invited by I.E.D.C. officials to travel to Israel at their expense in the summer of '94, and when the Ethics Committee ruled that the trip could be construed as a gift and could be barred, the company's chairman and C.E.O., David Yerushalmi, had suggested that she work for the company; and she had been hired as a vice-president of business development in September of 1994.

Both she and her husband repudiated the notion that there was any conflict of interest. Critics pointed out that I.E.D.C. is trying to win approval from the Israeli government to manage a free-trade zone, and that the Israeli government is highly dependent on United States aid—something that Gingrich is in a position to affect. Gingrich declared that critics would see a conflict of interest "in everything that my wife or I do for the rest of our lives," and went on to say, "Why are wives being drawn into this? I've had nothing to do with the company she works for. She does no lobbying with the U.S. government and no lobbying with the Congress."

The story, however, is rather more complicated. I.E.D.C. is an offshoot of the Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies (I.A.S.P.S.), with offices in Jerusalem and also in Washington, D.C., in the building where Marianne worked. The president of I.A.S.P.S., Robert J. Loewenberg, is also the chairman of the board of the Koret Israel Economic Development Funds, an Israeli nonprofit organization funded by American sources. Two Koret fellows were assigned to the congressional offices of Representative John Kasich, chairman of the House Budget Committee, and Representative Dick Armey for a month last spring. Loewenberg divides his time between Israel and Washington.

When I met Loewenberg at a GOPAC conference last spring, he told me, "This politician"—that is, Gingrich—"and his wife came to visit us at our office. I said, 'O.K., here's this politician, very nice, but I think it's the wife we should focus on.' " It was true, he acknowledged, that she had no experience in this area, "but I thought she would be very good at selling and marketing the concept"—of the free-trade zone—"to companies here and in Europe." That, he said, was how she came to be hired. And when she was hired, last September, it was not as a vice-president for business development but as a consultant; her promotion came after Gingrich became Speaker. "MARIANNE GINGRICH JOINS IEDC MARKETING TEAM," ran the headline on the cover story of the I.E.D.C. bimonthly newsletter for February-March of this year.

Loewenberg, with whom Marianne worked closely, is an American who emigrated to Israel in the early eighties with a mission of radical reform. He believes that Israel is being destroyed by "socialist" economic policies, by a "statism" that he considers extreme, and by a cultural modernism that he, an Orthodox Jew, deplores. In an I.A.S.P.S. newsletter, Loewenberg writes lengthy diatribes against the Israeli press, the peace process, the surrendering of the Golan Heights, United States aid to Israel, and other harbingers of the apocalypse. ("Once socialism cracked, beginning in the 1970s, the smart ones started going in droves," one such screed begins. "This left Israel to the ascetic visions of the socialist intellectuals whose love is mostly for mankind and pornography, and to the merciless grindings of left-wing politicos and bureaucrats.")

Loewenberg's newsletter makes it plain that he regards the 1994 Republican victory—and, specifically, the leadership of Gingrich, for whom he has only encomiums—as a critical opportunity. He wants congressional hearings on the deal with the Arabs in the Golan Heights. He would like to see United States aid to Israel cut back dramatically, as a means of prodding Israel to more of a free-market economy. He also supported legislation, introduced by Robert Dole, the Senate Majority Leader, in the Senate and Gingrich in the House, requiring the Administration to begin breaking ground for a new Embassy in Jerusalem by the end of next year—something that the Clinton Administration and officials of the Rabin government have charged would hurt the peace process (which Loewenberg strongly opposes). One person told me that "Newt was very much behind the move of the Embassy to Jerusalem, and Marianne was helpful on that." (Tony Blankley, Gingrich's spokesman, said that any idea of Marianne being involved was "a fantasy" and that Gingrich followed Dole's lead in proposing to move the Embassy.)

Loewenberg, however, has a full-scale agenda on which he hopes to influence Gingrich and other members of Congress, and so the idea that Marianne Gingrich's job posed no conflict of interest seems patently false. Gingrich has long been one of those people who see a happy confluence of interest in situations where others see conflict (for example, in his televised college course he promoted as models of American business the companies that had helped to finance the course), and in this regard he and his wife apparently see eye to eye.

Gingrich has assiduously cultivated Marianne's image. He likes to talk about the fact that she is from a small Midwestern town—Leetonia, Ohio—which he describes as "classic rural America, a town in which a lot of Norman Rockwell still exists." It seems to afford him the kind of idealized backdrop that his own family cannot—with his divorced mother, distant stepfather, rootless childhood, and, now, gay-activist half sister. Tony Blankley also stresses that Marianne Gingrich is "a country girl, with simple tastes," who wouldn't be able to imagine a richer life style if she tried. But David Stenglein, an Atlanta businessman who is a close friend of the Gingriches (and who told me that he and Marianne have discussed his working on her staff if she were to become First Lady), says, "Marianne wanted the money," and had therefore encouraged Gingrich's four-and-a-half-million-dollar book deal with Rupert Murdoch's HarperCollins. (Gingrich, of course, relinquished the advance after the public outcry last December.) Stenglein, who describes himself as a successful entrepreneur, said that at the time the deal was made Marianne had asked him, eagerly, "What does it feel like to be a millionaire?"

V—HISTORIC MOMENTS

At his 1994 victory celebration of the Republican takeover of both houses of Congress, a rapturous-looking Gingrich exclaimed, "This is truly a wildly historic night!" When it became official, shortly after midnight, a huge scroll was unfurled, inscribed with the names of all the Speakers of the House of Representatives, beginning with Frederick A. C. Muhlenberg and ending with Newt Gingrich. Setting off for a round of press interviews, Gingrich asked a group of his friends and associates to gather for a planning meeting at 3 A.M. And when that group assembled he told them that he had asked his assistant, Rachel Phillips, to take down their names, because he thought the record was something they would like their children and grandchildren to have.

The tone that Gingrich set that night has been his keynote ever since. He has chastised the press for not grasping the historic magnitude of the moment. During a speech in mid-February that belittled reporters for writing stories speculating about the rocky nature of his relationship with Bob Dole, he said, "This is like describing the eighteen-fifties and the eighteen-sixties, and instead of understanding the Emancipation Proclamation, the rise of Lincoln, the creation of the Republican Party, the establishment of a national system, the winning of the Civil War, and the creation of modern America, getting involved in whether Seward and Cameron liked each other in the Cabinet—and having that on page one."

He is forever reminding his troops that they are making history, and when divisiveness has threatened he demands of them: Are they willing to take responsibility for the failure of this great historic opportunity? Representative Deborah Pryce, of Ohio, told me, "To hear him talk in closed Conference meetings is really quite stirring. He's talking to members who have elected him, whom he's led into the majority. It is really a historic moment, it's history in the making."

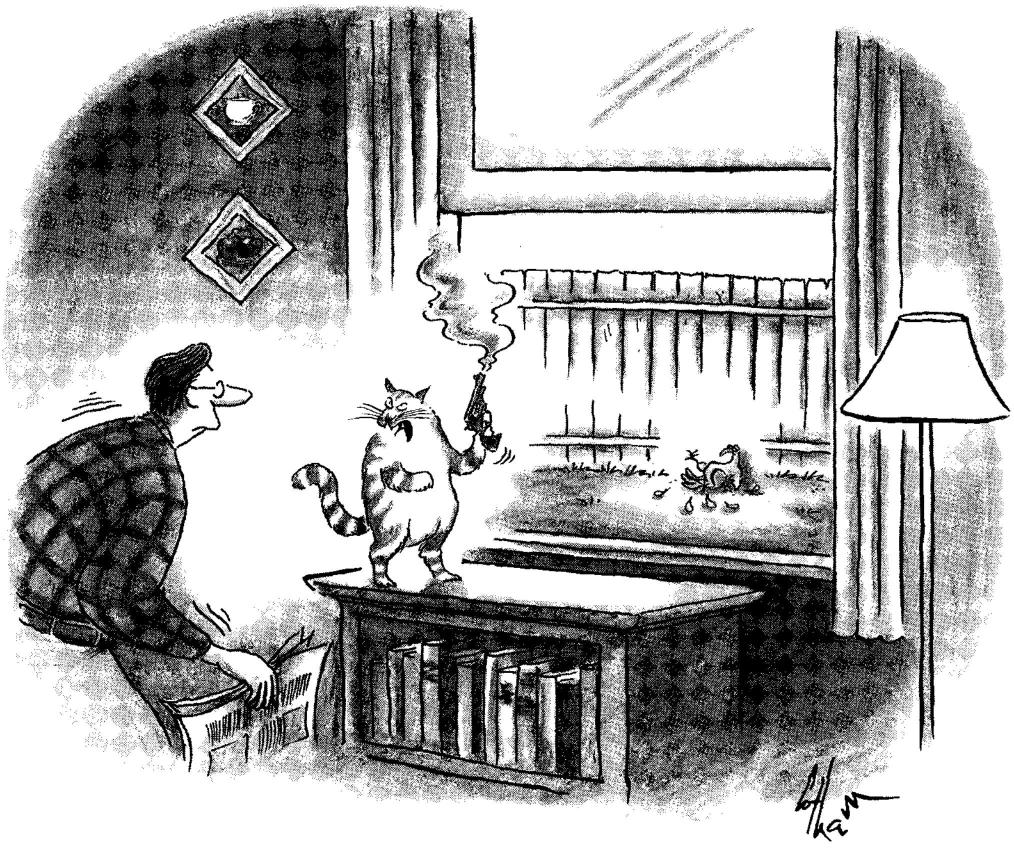
Gingrich is operating on his longtime principle: if he can define reality for a large enough number of people, he can make it so; if a sufficient number of people now believe that they are engaged in a process that is historic, its chances of becoming so are greatly enhanced. That belief serves to elevate the political process, too, imparting to it—and its leader—a new stature.

To achieve the unity and discipline that he wanted in the first hundred days, Gingrich had known he would need a rigid superstructure to enclose the Republican Conference's diverse elements and mold them into shape; namely, the Contract with America. Although it was, of course, used in the 1994 congressional campaigns, several people close to Gingrich told me that he had always intended it to be, even more, a *governing* document—something to keep his troops in formation, with their sights fixed on a single goal.

The contract had ten items. ("Newt wanted there to be ten," Ed Gillespie, the policy and communications director for House Majority Leader Dick Armey, said, "because ten is a mythical number, as in the Ten Commandments.") The ideas in the contract had been test-marketed by GOPAC for years, and, while some open questions probably remained to be determined (by polling and focus-group research), the document had essentially been sketched out by January, 1994. Gingrich's challenge, therefore, lay not in devising the contract but in getting his members to believe that *they* were doing it—and so to sign on. In the end, only three incumbents refused to sign.

Gingrich began the process at a February, 1994, retreat in Salisbury, Maryland, where he assigned the members the task of defining themselves according to his planning model: vision, strategies, projects, tactics. Several facilitators—including Frank Luntz, a young consultant who made his name working for Pat Buchanan and Ross Perot and is an especially fawning Gingrich disciple—were on hand to help. "It *was* a little strange," Representative Deborah Pryce recalled. "These members sitting around a table and being asked, 'If we use this word, how does this make you feel?' " Strange or not, the process was essential if their plan was to succeed, said Barry Jackson, the executive director of the House Republican Conference, which is chaired by Representative John Boehner. "If we had tried to do this top down—if we had said, '*This* is what we're doing'—it never would have worked," he added. Jackson noted that one of Gingrich's fundamental precepts is that people need to "feel part of the genesis, to have a sense of ownership."

After Salisbury, the contract became the project of the House Republicans' communications operation, which has undergone a metamorphosis under Gin-



"What the hell was I supposed to do? I've been declawed!"

grich. Representative Pryce was appointed a member of a four-person Planning and Learning Team. "We focussed on how to get the membership to buy into these ideas, to accept them as their own, to have a feeling of ownership," she told me. "And we concentrated on repeating the themes enough so they would know them and use them. . . . So it was a way of getting them to resonate through all the members." The Planning and Learning Team met and decided on the theme of either the day or the week, and communicated that to the Theme Team, and the Theme Team, in turn, disseminated the information via fax to all the members, who were urged to make speeches on the themes on the floor.

"Republican state legislators have been listening to Newt's GOPAC *tapes for nearly a decade. They have become whips, leade*

Today, the Republicans' communications operation, which is still run by Boehner and has expanded even further since their takeover, produces a constant stream of bulletins. There is a daily publication, *Conference Notes*, with a "Message of the Day" and a featured issue. There is *Talking Points*, a list of statements geared to specific subjects, like Medicare. (One of these bulletins is headlined "GOP FIGHTS TO SAVE MEDICARE FOR SENIORS, BABY BOOMERS, AND OUR CHILDREN.") There is the *Theme Team Weekly Review*, which features "Line of the Week" and, for each day of the week, "Line of the Day," and "Daily Quotes" from various House Republicans, who are thus lauded for having delivered their messages in particularly exemplary ways.

Among the members battered by these waves of instructive messages—and happily so—is a dour sophomore representative named Ernest J. Istook, Jr., of Oklahoma. Istook sponsored a measure to prohibit the use of Medicaid funds for abortions in cases of rape or incest, and he is also the House point man for the Religious Equality Amendment, which concerns prayer in the schools. He told me that the House Republicans' communications operation—part of it directed to members, and part to the outside world—is of critical importance. It must counteract—in some ways by imitating—"the establishment media." "Why do you think *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News & World Report* all have the same covers, many weeks?" he demanded, in his inquisitorial way.

I faltered. Surely he was not suggesting that they coördinated?

"No, but there are people out there working to make sure that happens," he asserted. "Now, we want to make sure radio-talk-show hosts, political pundits, editorial writers all receive the *same* information, *contemporaneously*, with the same parts *accented*."

Istook is at home in the Gingrichian universe, whose central tenet is that no energy spent on communications control is ever wasted. It is an approach that has reaped bountiful rewards for Gingrich thus far. Pete du Pont recalled that Gingrich said to him when he first took over GOPAC, "We really ought to educate all nine thousand"—candidates, that is—"so they're all singing from the same book," and du Pont commented to me, "Now he's doing the same thing with his congressmen."

"NEWT GINGRICH is the first conservative I have ever known who knows how to use power," Paul Weyrich said admiringly when I interviewed him in May, the day after the House vote on the Republican leadership's budget. He was still marvelling that only one Republican member—not ten, as he had estimated—voted against it. Weyrich attributed Gingrich's success to more than his "motivational" style; he pointed out the lengths to which Gingrich has gone to cultivate moderates, among them Representative Nancy Johnson (now the chair of the Ethics Committee), Representative Steve Gunderson, and Representative Christopher Shays.

Shays was the author of the Congressional Accountability Act, one of the institutional reforms mentioned in the contract, which proposed to hold Congress to the laws that apply to the rest of the country and was passed at the House's first meeting this year. Shays had first introduced this measure in 1993. Weyrich pointed out to me that there were other pieces of legislation on the same issue that he believed were stronger than Shays's, but that Gingrich had nonetheless chosen his. "Shays had got elected and disappeared. He was not in synch with his own caucus, and Democrats didn't *need* liberal Republicans then," Weyrich went on. "Newt sees this. He says, 'You are the star! We're going to put this out there!' Shays feels, This isn't bad—suddenly he *is* a star!"

Weyrich noted that "Newt is very shrewd about picking these guys," and then if, on something like the budget vote, "they get nervous, Newt goes to them, and he says, 'I'm not going to have any defections on this.' "

Gingrich has also made certain "structural changes" in the House—changes that, in Weyrich's words, "put him at the center of the universe." Many of these changes, which are profound, were instituted in the name of devolution, downsizing, and openness as soon as the Republicans took over. Three full committees and twenty-five subcommittees were eliminated. Committee staffs were cut by a third. Caucuses were defunded. The seniority system was dismantled, and six-year term limits were imposed for committee chairmen; the Speaker was given a term limit of eight years. The old fiefdoms of autocratic committee chairmen no longer exist, and power has been diminished throughout the institution, with one exception: the office of the Speaker. It was devolution, in other words, for everyone but him.

While others' staffs were cut, the Speaker's grew. Gingrich decided to defund the congressional caucuses, an associate of Gingrich's told me, because he saw them as independent power centers. And by changing the structure of the Republican Steering Committee he has acquired far more power to appoint committee chairmen and a greater say in the selection of committee and subcommittee members. (According to Weyrich, Gingrich said of the Senate, "If Bob Dole had gone after Mark Hatfield and John Chafee"—two moderate Republican committee chairmen—"he'd be living in a different universe today.") The dismantling of the seniority system went hand in hand with this change; and, by reaching down four members below the most senior to make Representative Bob Livingston the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Gingrich underscored just how free he was to reward and punish.

Especially at the start, some insufficiently subservient chairmen were summoned and, in the words of one Republican strategist, Gingrich "lashed them to the cross." A congressional staffer confirmed that this was indeed what Gingrich had done, saying, "Some chairmen were trying to test their prerogatives. And he did call them in and say, 'Here's where we're going. Are you willing to go that way?' They said yes. And he said, 'Then get your committee there.' "

A House Republican E-mail message (sent by mistake to a Democrat) shows that in mid-September Gingrich described to Representative Pat Roberts, chairman of the Agriculture Committee, how he could punish three recalcitrant committee members with the loss of committee chairmanships and assignments if they failed to vote for the leadership's farm bill. Ultimately, however, Gingrich took another tack. Invoking what the *Times* called "a little-used parliamentary procedure," he and Roberts bypassed the Agriculture Committee altogether and delegated a different committee chairman, John Kasich, of the Budget Committee, to handle the bill.

With the all-important Appropriations Committee, Gingrich had preemptively safeguarded himself by asking that all the subcommittee chairmen sign a statement that they could be removed

nmittee chairmen, and even speakers. It is a network prepared to listen to what they perceive to be marching orders."

if they did not follow the Republican Conference's agenda. Such oaths of allegiance are extremely unusual, if not unprecedented.

In the last few months, the Appropriations Committee, formerly one of the most bipartisan committees in Congress, has emerged as a major facilitator of the Republican agenda. Attached to its bills have been an avalanche of riders; many are used to advance the ideological agenda of the social conservatives, and many others to reward special interests—by curbing activities of labor and environmental agencies, among others. Democrats used riders in the past (to protect a friendly industry from deregulation, for example), but the number of special-interest riders attached to spending bills this year had not been reached in decades.

Democratic loyalists acknowledge that their committee fiefdoms represented an abuse of power, and that liberals and conservatives alike long pined for "party discipline" as a solution to legislative gridlock. But the power that has been leached away from the committees and deposited in the Speaker's office represents not just a shift of power but an assault on the two-hundred-year-old committee system itself. If a chairman is told, "Get your committee there"—and if he knows that his chairmanship depends on his obeying the order—the process of hearing testimony and deliberating may still occur, but only as a charade.

At the same time that Gingrich was undermining the committee system, he was quietly creating an ever-multiplying number of House task forces. In July, the Speaker's press office indicated that there were fourteen task forces; however, one of Gingrich's close associates estimates that there are at least thirty-five. The Party line on task forces, as it has been delivered by Tony Blankley, is that they are "inclusionary devices," designed to cause power to be more widely shared. Barry Jackson elaborated on this statement, saying that they function as "competing centers" to the committees. "Task forces are a way to prevent power centers from building—you're diffusing power," he explained. For example, the issue of guns comes under the jurisdiction of the Judiciary Committee, but now there is also a Second Amendment Task Force. (Its members, as the name suggests, are staunch opponents of gun control.) The members of a task force run a kind of mini-campaign, trying to build support among other representatives. Eventually, the issue must still come before its committee; but if there are irreconcilable differences between the committee and the task force the leadership intervenes. This system—a hybrid of a committee system and a task-force system—is "organized chaos," Jackson said. "The *only* way it can work is to have a leader who is strong and confident enough to let it rise up around him, but who, if challenged, will either coöpt or vanquish it—and who knows when to coöpt and when to vanquish."

Task forces, unlike committees, cannot become power centers, because once they have dealt with a given issue they are disbanded. But they can operate in a far more freewheeling fashion, because they are governed by no rules. For example, special interests can come before them to plead their case, out of public view; and, because task forces have no staffs, their members may be more likely to rely for their information on those special-interest proponents. If the House were to move from a committee system to a task-force system, the Speaker would operate with even more untrammelled power (amid less oversight) than he does now.

Representative Jim Nussle, a Gingrich acolyte, told me that once Gingrich had named him head of the post-election transition he "started with the basics," and he explained, "I read the Constitution, Article I. We have to meet. We *don't* have to have a Ways and Means Committee. We said, 'Let's throw everything out in our mind, let's go outside the nine dots!' "

They are, however, going outside the nine dots in stages. Gingrich has talked about "how archaic the committee system is," Representative Pryce told me. "He said, 'We can't have all this upheaval all at once. But eventually it would be better if committees could be replaced by task forces.' " And one of Gingrich's close associates told me that Gingrich has already begun the transition "from a committee-chair to a task-force system."

Eddie Mahe, the Republican consultant who has strategized with Gingrich for years and is working with Gingrich's lieutenants, left no doubt about the aims of Gingrich's revolution. "We need to fundamentally change the laws," he declared. "We have to take out the laws by the roots and replace them with totally new laws."

VI—OUR MORAL IMPERATIVE

Gingrich's ongoing flirtation with a bid for the Presidency has posed a classic dilemma for his party's leadership. "The degree of Newt's dominance is unprecedented in modern American politics," the Republican strategist William Kristol, now of the conservative magazine *The Weekly Standard*, commented. "He has established a degree of party loyalty in voting unseen in sixty years. When I talk to Republican audiences, they *love* Newt. Insofar as the Party wants a candidate who will carry on the agenda in '96, the Party *wants* to nominate Newt Gingrich. He speaks to the yearning of Republican activists in a way that no one else does." If Dole were to falter and Colin Powell did not enter the race, there would be "huge pressure for Newt to run," Kristol added. "You'd want to structure it as a draft. That would be important. You'd have to convince people that it is for the good of the Party that Newt run—that he would be obliged to do it for that reason, not out of ambition. Because if it's his ambition then it's just another politician who wants the next-higher office."

That scenario tempts many Republican activists. But if Gingrich is more exciting than any other potential candidate except Powell, he also poses greater risks. One of Gingrich's closest allies told me, "Conservatives are very nervous about his running for President. There is a sense that the movement is riding on Newt's shoulders now, and that if he ran and lost it would be a *bad* defeat—because of press revelations about his personal life, about ethical problems—and everything would crumble."

It is telling that nervousness about Gingrich's character extends even to those who consider themselves his supporters, who want so much to think well of him. In all but the most ardent true believers, he seems to stir a distinct unease. "There is no one in Congress who wants to be a great leader more," Representative Amo Houghton, of New York, commented. "But you have to have these things inside you, so they can resonate."

Ever since Gingrich was a young man, he has emulated his contemporaries as well as historical figures. When I interviewed him, Gingrich told me, "I try to study people who are good—that's one of the tricks." For example, he said that while shaking the hands of roughly two hundred House summer internes and posing for a photograph with each one, he had had Reagan in mind. Then, he reeled off a list of the people who had attributes that he has tried to replicate in himself. "President Bush, for organizing a coalition. Dick Cheney, for calm, steady management and calm, steady leadership. Trent Lott, for parliamentary ability. Jack Kemp, for heart and vision and passion. Vin Weber, for being really good at listening to your colleagues and recognizing that you're leading a collegial institution, not a hierarchical institution."

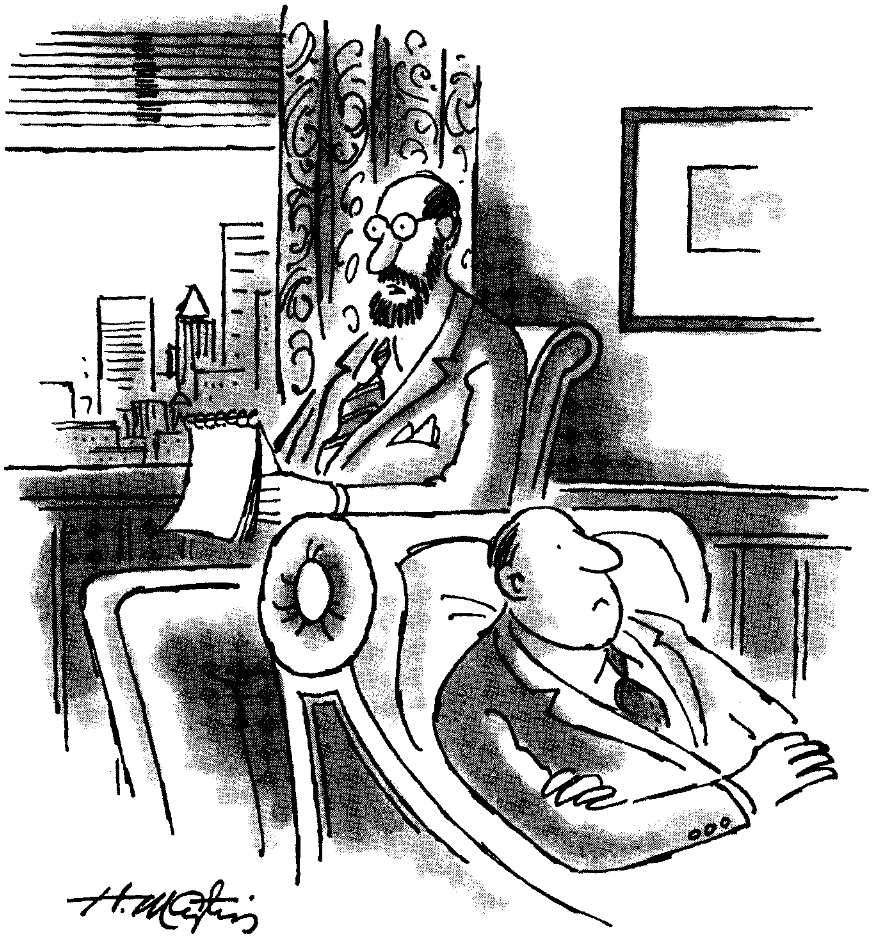
All this assiduous incorporating underscores the question of what lies within. One of Gingrich's associates, who shares many of his political views and believes that he is a constructive force in the country today, said that, after working with him several years, "what I concluded was that he doesn't have that moral compass that tells you if something is right or wrong." The associate went on, "He *talks* about right and wrong. But I think that for him everything is expedient. And he uses people for that, just as he uses people for speechwriting, for humor, for ideas—for everything. I think he uses people as a conscience." One Republican House member said to me, "I don't want to be like Mr. Krupp"—king of the munitions-makers under the Nazis—"going along believing it was good economically for Germany."

If Gingrich's fondest hopes should be realized, and he ultimately achieves the Presidency, perhaps in the year 2000, perhaps with a Republican-dominated Congress, just what he would have in store for this country is as opaque as the secret aims of his hero Toranaga. Gingrich's speeches and his college course and his nonfiction books, which all contain essentially the same material, are a simplistic, homiletic grab bag of notions and prescriptions. Ideas that seem at first glance somewhat original—like "Earning by Learning," his much trumpeted program to motivate poor children to read by paying them two dollars per book—turn out to be numerous variations on a single theme. Just as one pays children to read, so one should pay students to graduate early from high school, pay teen-agers on welfare not to get pregnant, pay adults when they get good results on a cardiovascular workup, pay Medicare recipients when they find fraud—and, conversely, make high schools pay for graduating a student who turns out to have needed remedial help, and make Medicaid patients pay *something*, even if it is just one dollar, when they go to the doctor.

This Skinnerian world, in which government seeks to control its citizens' behavior by using money as a tool, is, of course, a reductionist view of human behavior. But it is also a mightily activist—even intrusive (paying teen-agers not to get pregnant?)—notion of government. It is social engineering, but with a Gingrichian twist. This should not really come as any surprise (especially when one recalls that Atatürk engineered the adoption of a whole new writing system), for while Gingrich has employed the nomenclature of conservatism, he seems to have no integral philosophy. Cato's Ed Crane commented, "He's not a neocon, not a libertarian, not a social conservative, not an economic conservative—he has a little bit of all these things—but you want *some* kind of rudder there, to have some sense that a leader in a movement like this is basically headed in the right direction. As it is, you're depending too much on his instincts."

Crane went on to say, "I believe he has too expansive a view of what leadership is in a free society. It makes me uncomfortable. Our institutions—the Supreme Court, the Constitution—these are all constraints on Newt Gingrich."

Paul Weyrich, whose investment of political capital in Gingrich has paid off so handsomely, says he thinks that Gingrich is "not particularly suited for the Presidency." From Weyrich's standpoint, it seems plain, Gingrich was always a means to an end. "What he replaces the liberal welfare state with may not be to



"In your case, 'tis better to have loved and lost and loved and lost and loved and lost and loved and lost than never to have loved at all."

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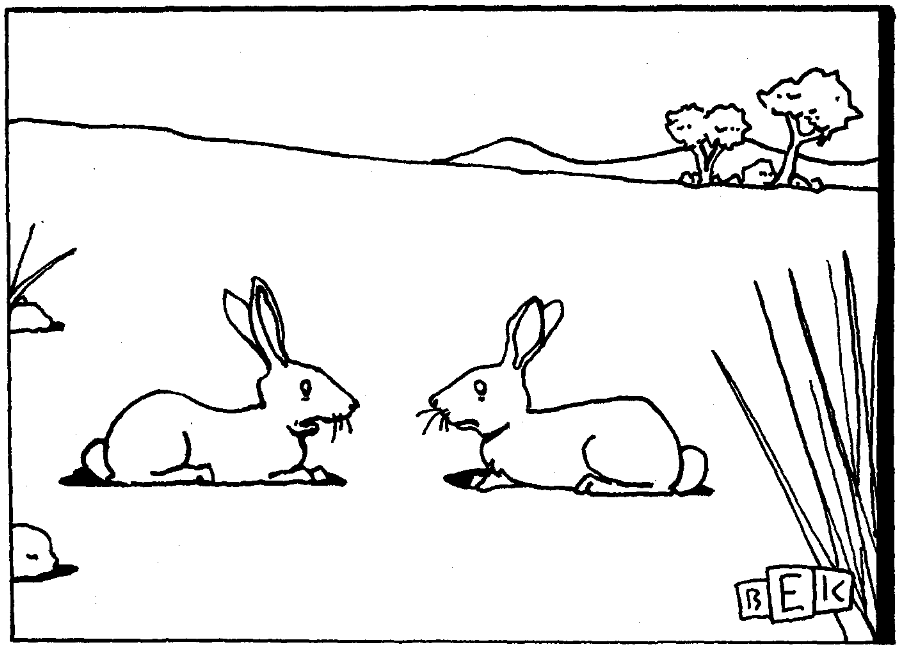


"Did you ever have one of those days when you felt you would never be soft and fluffy again?"

• •

our liking," Weyrich said. "It's a little like Yeltsin. He was very helpful in dismantling the Soviet Union—not great at the next phase."

The former representative Mickey Edwards, of Oklahoma, is a conservative Republican whose career in the House began two years before Gingrich's. It ended when he was caught up in the House bank-overdraft scandal and was challenged in the 1992 primary by Ernest Istook, the fervent hard-righter. Edwards is now teaching at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, at Harvard University. "It becomes very difficult to say what Newt believes in and what he doesn't," Edwards commented. "He is a major advocate of term limits, but he doesn't believe in them, as far as I know." Edwards went on, "Several years ago, he became persuaded that a line-item veto was a bad idea"—he had previously favored it—"and started going around to editorial boards arguing against it. Now he claims he's in favor of a line-item veto." In sum, Edwards said, "He uses issues to gain power."

Edwards defends Gingrich to his Harvard colleagues, who generally view Gingrich as a rabid right-winger. Gingrich is *not* that, Edwards tells them, although he did create that image for himself with his rhetoric. "He had to make the public believe that the Democrats were so rotten that you had to turn over the whole applecart," Edwards said. "I told him at the time it was *he* who was whipping up the system, creating the anger. . . . But he felt, You aren't going to change the status quo until they are dissatisfied with it. But when you start turning the public into a mob you've got a real problem. I kept saying, 'Newt, attack the Democrats, don't attack Congress! It's the single main institution of American government.' It was a case of exaggerating. He oversimplified to the point of creating discontent with government, with the ability of Americans to govern themselves."

Gingrich has chosen as his medium singularly raw, volatile currents—hatred of government, class and racial resentments ("They don't cut each other on Saturday nights"), homophobia—deliberately roiled them, and, in the end, exploited them more successfully than any other individual. It is a dangerous game. One of Gingrich's associates told me that Gingrich has privately voiced concern about the forces that have been unleashed in the rising tide of antigovernment, rightist sentiment against blacks and Jews. Edwards is convinced that Gingrich's greatest challenge now lies in controlling his own self-styled revolutionaries. Referring to the freshman class in the House, Edwards said, "They are what the second generation was to the first in the French Revolution—they beheaded them! When you create a Frankenstein monster, it doesn't always follow your will."

Perhaps. This is the conventional wisdom: that Gingrich must struggle to restrain his zealous troops. (Last week, Duke Cunningham assailed the "Socialist tendencies" of the Democrats and castigated "Communist supporters," singling out Robert Reich, the Secretary of Labor: "He goes along with Karl Marx in many of his writings.") The danger is that the troops will go too far, drive out the moderates, and fracture the unity that has thus far provided mainly winning votes. Gingrich has counselled them repeatedly—in a phrase now echoed by his lieutenants—"not to make the perfect the enemy of the good." And they are sometimes too retrograde for his futurist taste: at their retreat at Leesburg this year, they refused to ratify a vision statement that posited transforming the United States into "the first Third Wave nation." (To many of them, the socially liberal Tofflers are the enemy.)

But it was Gingrich who had decided, in an unprecedented move, to stack the most important committees (including Appropriations) with freshmen. Tony Blankley told me, commenting on their presence on those committees, "The freshmen are our shock troops." And it seems clear that those troops are performing precisely the role, over all, that Gingrich envisaged. For the wholesale dismantling he wants, he needs them, and he needs them to be as fanatical as many of them are. When I asked Eddie Mahe whether their zealousness was a problem for Gingrich, Mahe quickly replied, "It's what he *wanted*—the weight on that end. This way, he says, 'Let's amend the law,' and they say, 'Let's repeal it!' "

When I put the same question to the Majority Whip, Tom DeLay (who recently called the Environmental Protection Agency "the Gestapo of government"), he immediately answered, "No! We couldn't *do* this without those two classes"—the freshmen and sophomores. "They are what is holding up the rest of us. They've taken some real tough votes that more senior members wouldn't take. When you start with a base vote of over a hundred hard-charging, focussed members, it's easy to jump out in front of that parade and lead them."

THE biggest hurdle confronting Gingrich is the one he has until now managed never to take: appealing to the broad mass of the American people. It seems extremely unlikely that in reasonably normal times in this country

Gingrich could prevail in a national election. But the worse the crisis, the better for Gingrich; the greater the insecurity and despair, the more seductive his veiled scapegoating, his absolutism, and his messianism would become.

In the course of the last year or so, he has set himself the task of subtly recasting his message. One of Gingrich's closest advisers told me that he well understands that if he is to gain broad public support for his revolution—to say nothing of attaining the White House—he must capture the moral high ground. Gingrich told a GOPAC dinner just after the election last November, "I want to suggest that our moral imperative for helping the poor is not because we want to be cheap; not because we want to cut taxes; not because we want to somehow magically be able to protect the suburbs from them." He paused slightly, and one could almost hear the audience collectively wondering what the right answer could possibly be. "We want to dramatically replace the current structure because it is destroying the very people it's designed to help," he continued. "No one has been harmed more by the Great Society and the counterculture than the poor."

That is how he has gone on to frame the debate about the poor and welfare over the last eight months—demonstrating once again what Terry Kohler had described as Gingrich's "ability to take an issue, rotate it in three-dimensional space, and, in the process of doing that, change the character of the debate."

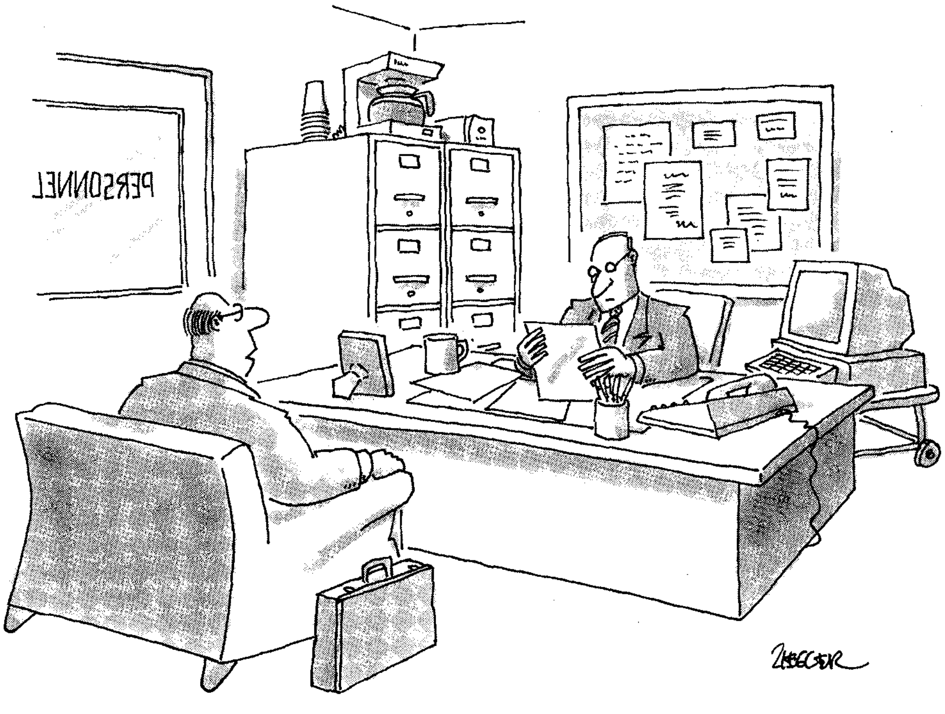
In Gingrich's political arsenal, symbolism occupies almost as prized a place as language. And in his effort to be seen as sensitive to the plight of the poor, Earning by Learning has been a potent symbol. House Republicans, after all, have voted for measures that would cut off funds for summer jobs, cut payments to disabled children, cut off payments to teen-age mothers, deny further aid to a mother on welfare who has another child—and now the Senate has in considerable measure followed suit in its own welfare legislation. These actions, if they become law, would incontrovertibly render the lot of poor children harder, and Gingrich has used Earning by Learning as a kind of amulet to ward off critics' charges of callousness. He wears an "Earning by Learning" button on his lapel. He refers to it in most public appearances and has posed for numerous photo opportunities with children enrolled in the program. When criticism of his book tour surfaced, he announced that he would be donating all the money he made from book-signing during the tour to the Earning by Learning Foundation.

He has promoted Earning by Learning as a model of the kind of voluntarism that, in the cultural renaissance he means to bring about, will replace the assistance to the poor that is now dispensed by the government. In remarks he made to the American Medical Association last March he said, "It's very simple: no bureaucracy, very voluntaristic. We go into public housing projects, we pay little kids—second and third graders who are likely not to learn how to read—two dollars a book for every book they read. . . . The only money in the program goes to the child, so for a thousand dollars you have five hundred books read."

As described by Gingrich, the program sounds unassailable. However, it is not true that "the only money . . . goes to the child." A considerable amount of it has gone to Mel Steely, Gingrich's authorized biographer and the national coördinator of Earning by Learning. Like most of Gingrich's pet political projects, this one has served several purposes at once, softening his public image while rewarding a friend and ally. Last July, Phil Kuntz, of the *Wall Street Journal*, reported that Steely had been paid more than thirty thousand dollars since 1992. That was nearly half of the program's sixty-two-thousand-dollar endowment. (Steely earns forty-three thousand dollars a year from his job at West Georgia.)

When I interviewed Gingrich a couple of weeks after the *Wall Street Journal* piece appeared, he pointed to it as yet another example of the bias and ill will animating what, in speeches, he generally refers to scathingly as "the liberal media élite." A lot of the press, he declared, is "*purely* dishonest, *maliciously* misleading." He said, of the *Journal* piece in particular, "It was a deliberately malicious article, designed to cause us pain." Then, as he often does, he segued into an allusion to a movie—a typically idealistic and sentimental movie: "It reminded me of a scene in 'Boys Town,' where Spencer Tracy goes in and talks to the editor. He says, 'Why is your newspaper deliberately attacking the orphanage?' A very interesting scene."

What is remarkable about Gingrich in the end is not the degree to which he dissembles but the theatricality of his outrage when he is charged with dissembling, and the self-righteous force of his counterattack. He is, of course, not original in this—history offers plentiful examples of leaders who intimidated their critics (especially the press) by charging



"The years 1966 through 1995 are blank because I was on tour with the Grateful Dead."

them with bias, and these precedents are not pretty—but Gingrich is surely one of the most accomplished practitioners of this particular skill. His opponents are chameleons and demagogues, his critics are cynics and liars: it is a feat of projection amazing in its transparency, and yet, probably because it is so daring, it works.

As Gingrich's fall offensive gets under way, his rhetorical contortions have become all the more elaborate. Medicare is the pivot upon which his revolution swings; without cuts in projected spending of two hundred and seventy billion dollars from Medicare, the House budget—with its massive tax cut—will not work. Early in the year, though, Frank Luntz had cautioned the Republicans that his polling showed they must not say that they are cutting Medicare in order to balance the budget. Gingrich had struggled. He had talked about simultaneously *improving* Medicare and achieving cuts in spending, through, among other things, technological innovation. (This is not possible, his friend Mack Mattingly pointed out to me, and Gingrich has since stopped saying it.) As one of Gingrich's closest allies explained, the anxiety about how to present the Medicare cuts was enormous, and Gingrich and his associates were afraid that they might actually lose the Medicare battle, and, with it, everything; and then someone brought them the report of the Hospital Insurance Trust Fund, a Medicare fiscal overseer. The report predicts that Medicare will go bankrupt in the year 2002.

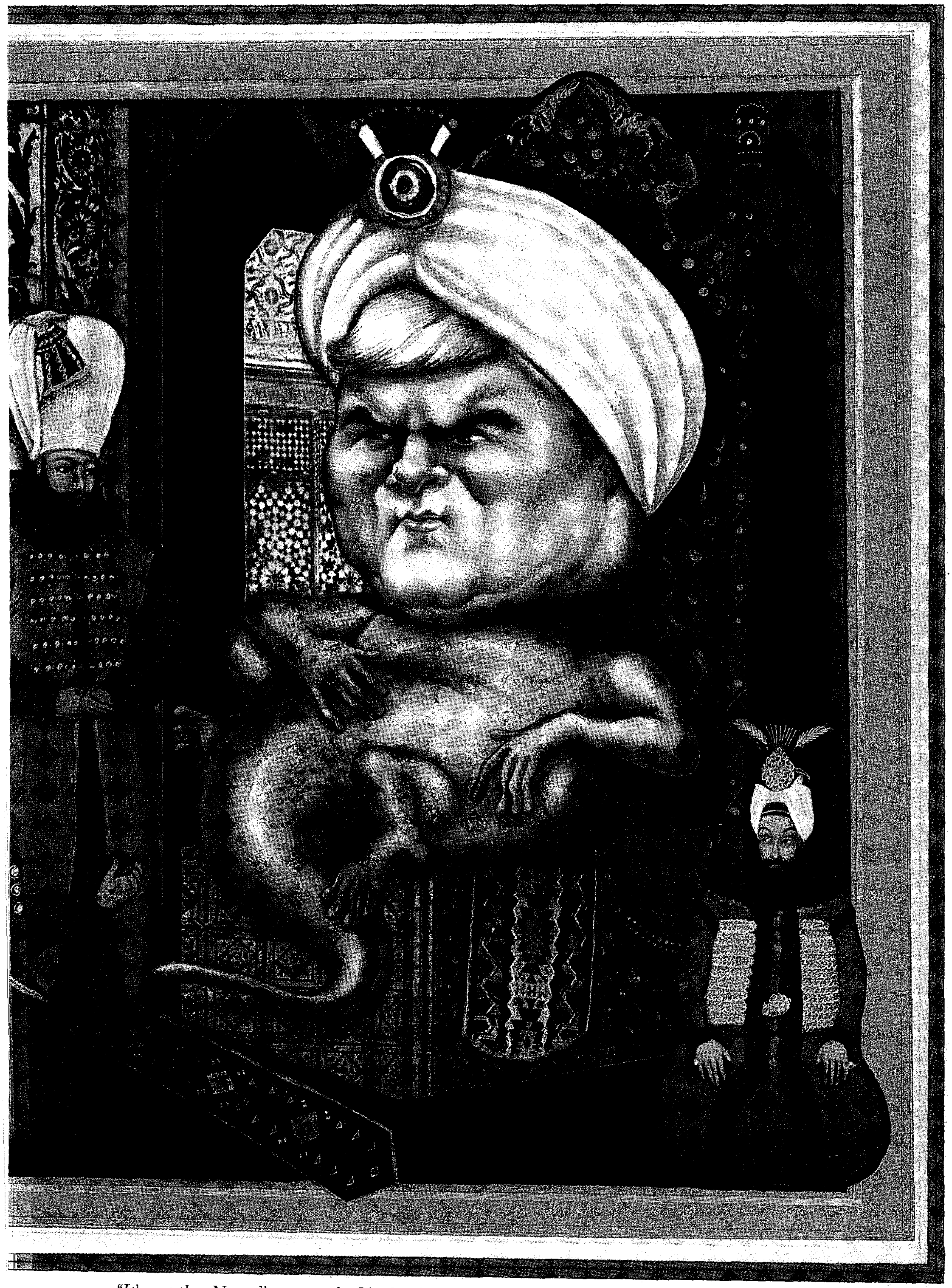
It was like a godsend, this person said, chuckling. The trustees had given a similar warning for many years, but no one had made an issue of it. (In fact, on the numerous occasions since 1970 that the trustees have declared that Medicare was approaching bankruptcy, Congress invariably found a way to "save" it.) "The Clinton people said, 'Why didn't you say this when the trustees' report came out last year?' We said, 'It was different then.' " The cuts the Republicans have outlined are far greater than what the Clinton Administration believes would be required to maintain solvency. But no matter. Ever since the discovery of the report last April, "saving Medicare" has been in the House Republicans' litany.

In observing Gingrich's current handling of the Medicare legislation, it is useful to note his remarks in a speech in March, 1994, in which he predicted what the Democrats' modus operandi would be on the Clintons' health-care plan—since what Gingrich has to say about his adversaries so often provides a telling window into his own actions. "The Democratic leadership will try to ram through a secret Clinton plan because they can't pass an open Clinton plan," Gingrich charged. "They will come out of the conference at the last minute in late September, early October, and the battle cry will be 'You can't vote no and go home.' Now, nobody will have read the bill."

Prophetic words—but not about the Clinton plan. Even for Gingrich, who speaks endlessly about the importance of public debate and, again, listening, it was extraordinarily brazen to release the details of his plan only when there was no time for debate—and with a single day of hearings. It is a high-stakes gamble, reminiscent, in a way, of the time he took on Wright, risking everything. But all that was on the table then was his own political survival; now it is the health and financial security of millions of older Americans.

Gingrich plays by his own rules. By being engaging and colorful and dynamic—and, like the Noh actor Toranaga, by staging bravura performances—he usually gets away with it, on matters large and small. Shortly before his swearing-in, he was interviewed by Brian Lamb, of C-SPAN, at Zoo Atlanta. In response to a question by Lamb about whether he might be considering a Presidential bid (this was months before Gingrich publicly acknowledged it), he demurred, saying that whether he achieves his goals for this country "as Speaker or in whatever position I do it in is irrelevant." And, in any event, he continued, he just says and does whatever he thinks is right, and doesn't worry about the consequences. Gingrich looked Lamb squarely in the eye, and said, "The morning I get up and say, 'Gee, I'll start calculating what I ought to do,' I think I'll just be useless."

Unhampered by the internal censor that inhibits most of us in our discourse and actions, Gingrich has an enormous advantage in the political arena. He is free to say and do what he pleases, affording himself the kind of freewheeling latitude others can only fantasize about. That license goes unchecked, in large part, because what he is doing defies our most fundamental assumptions: one simply does not expect to find so consummate a con artist serving as Speaker of the House. ♦

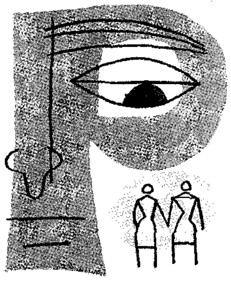


"It's not that Newt lies to people. It's that he's a chameleon and they see in him what they want to see."

FICTION

THE WOMEN WHO GOT AWAY

BY JOHN UPDIKE



PIERCE JUNCTION was an isolated New Hampshire town somewhat dignified by the presence of a small liberal-arts college, and we survived by clustering together like a ball of snakes in a desert cave. The sixties had taught us the high moral value of copulation, and we were slow to give up on an activity so simultaneously pleasurable and healthy. Still, you couldn't sleep with everybody; we were bourgeoisie, responsible, with jobs and children, and affairs demanded energy and extracted wear and tear. We hadn't learned yet to take the emotion out of sex. Looking back, the numbers don't add up to what an average college student now manages in four years. There were women you failed ever to sleep with; these, in retrospect, have a perverse vividness, perhaps because the contacts, in the slithering ball of snakes, were so few that they have stayed distinct.

"Well, Martin," Audrey Lancaster murmured to me toward the end of a summer cruise on a boat hired out of Portsmouth in celebration of somebody or other's fortieth birthday, "I see what they say about you, at last." The "at last" was a sort of dig, and the "they" was presumably female in gender. I wondered how much conversation went on, and along lines how specific, among the wives and divorcées of our set. I had been standing there by the rail, momentarily alone, mellow on my portion of California Chablis, watching the Piscataqua River shakily reflect the harbor lights as the boat swung to dock and the loudspeaker system piped Simon and Garfunkel into the night.

My wife was slow-dancing on the forward deck with her lover, Frank Greer. Audrey had materialized beside me and my hand went around her waist as if we might dance, too. There my hand stayed and like the gentle buzz you get from a frayed appliance cord the reality of her haunch burned through to my fingers, my palm. She was a solid, smooth-faced woman, so nearsighted that she moved with a certain splay-footed pugnacity, as if something she didn't quite see might knock her over. Her contact lenses were always getting lost, in somebody's lawn or at the back of her eyeballs. She had married young and was a bit younger than the rest of us. You had to love her, seeing her out on the tennis court in frayed denim cutoffs missing the ball completely, with her sturdy brown legs and big, squinty smile. Her waist was smooth and flexible in summer cotton, and, yes, she was right, for the first time in all our years of acquaintance I sensed her as a potential mate, as a piece of the cosmic puzzle that might fit my piece.

But I also felt that, basically, she didn't care for me, not enough to come walking through all those risks and spasms of guilt, all those hoops of flame. She distrusted me, the way you distrust a competitor. We were both clowns, bucking to be elected Funniest in the Class. Further, she was taken, doubly: not only married, with the four children customary for our generation, but with a long-term relationship, murky but adhesive, with my best friend, Rodney Miller—if one could be said to have same-sex friends in our rather doctrinairely heterosexual enclave. She had a nice way of drawling out poisonous remarks, and said now, to me, "Shouldn't you go tell Jeanne and Frank the boat is about to dock? They might get arrested by the Portsmouth fuzz for public indecency."

I said, "Why me? I'm not the cruise director."

Jeanne was my wife. Her love for Frank, in the twisted way of things back then, helped bind me to her: I felt so sorry for her, having to spend most of her hours with me and the children when her heart was elsewhere. She had been raised a French Catholic, and there was something noble for her about suffering and self-denial; her invisible hair shirt kept her torso as erect as a dancer's and added to her beauty in my eyes. I didn't like Audrey's mocking her, or did I? Perhaps my feelings were more primitive, more stupidly possessive, than I knew at the time. I tightened my grip on Audrey's waist, approaching a painful pinch, then let go, and went forward to where Jeanne and Frank, the music stopped, looked as if they had just woken up, with bloated, startled faces. Frank Greer had been married to Winifred, until rather recently in our little local history. Divorce, which had been flickering at our edges for a decade while our vast pool of children slowly bubbled up through the school grades toward, we hoped, psychological sturdiness, was still rare in fact, and sat raw on Frank, like the red cheek he had been pressing against my wife's as if against a sweaty pillow.

Maureen Miller, in one of those intervals in bed when passion had been slaked but an awkward half hour of usable time remained before I could in decency sneak away, once told me that Winifred resented the fact that, in the years when the affair between Frank and Jeanne was common knowledge, I had never made a pass at her. Winifred, sometimes called Freddy, was an owlish small woman—a graceful white owl—with big dark eyes and unsunned skin and an Emily Dickinson hairdo atop a plump body that tapered to small and shapely hands and feet. If my wife held herself like a dancer, it was her lover's wife who in fact could dance, with a feathery nestling and lightness of fit that had an embarrassing erotic effect on me. Holding her in my arms, I would get an erection, and thus I would prudently avoid dancing with her until the end of the evening, when one or the other of us, in an attempt to persuade our spouses to tear themselves apart, would have put on an overcoat. Otherwise, I was not attracted to Winifred; like the model for her hairdo, she had literary ambitions, and a dogmatic, clipped, willfully oblique style. She seemed in her

ANDERS WENNGREN

utterances not exactly angry but faintly too firm.

"Well, I won't say no," she said, not altogether graciously, one night at one o'clock when Jeanne suggested that I walk Winifred home, through a snowstorm that had developed during one of our dinner parties and its inert, boozy aftermath, with couples or their remnants drifting off until just Winifred was left. She had a stern, impassive way of absorbing a great deal of liquor and betraying its presence in her system only by a slight lowering of her heavy blue lids over her eyes, and an increase of pedantry in her piercing, fluting voice. This was before the Greers' divorce. Frank was absent from the party on some mysterious excuse of a business trip; it was the first stage of their separation, I realized later. Jeanne, knowing more than she let on, had extended herself that night like a kid sister to the unescorted woman. She kept urging Freddy, as the party thinned, to give us one more tale of the creative-writing seminar she was taking, as a special student, at our local college, Bradbury. Bradbury had once been a bleak little Presbyterian seminary tucked up here, with its pillared chapel, in the foothills of the White Mountains, but it had long loosened its ecclesiastical ties and in the sixties had gone coed, with riotous results. "This one girl," Winifred said, accepting one more Kahlúa and brandy, "read a story that must have been *very* closely based on a painful breakup she had just gone through, and got nothing but the *most* sarcastic comments from the instructor, who must be a real sadist, or else it was his way of putting the make on her." Her expression conveyed disgust and great weariness with all such transactions. I supposed that she was displacing her anger at Frank onto the instructor, a New York poet who must have wished he were back in the West Village, where the sexual revolution was polymorphous. He was a dreary, sour, condescending fellow, in my occasional brushes with him, and disturbingly short as well. But these rehashed class sessions were all fascinating stuff, if you judged from Jeanne's animation and gleeful encouragement of the other woman to tell more. It was a rule of life in Pierce Junction that one was especially nice to the lover's spouse—by no means an insincere observance, for the secret sharing did breed a tortuous, guilt-warmed gratitude to the keeper of such a treasure.

But even Winifred through her veils of Kahlúa eventually realized that all things must have a stop, and stood up in our cold room (the thermostat had quit hours ago), and put her shawl up around her head, as if fluffing up her feathers. She accepted with a frown Jeanne's insistent suggestion that I escort her home. "Of course I'm in no condition to drive, this has been so lovely," she said to Jeanne, with a handshake that Jeanne turned into a fierce, pink-faced, rather frantic (it seemed to me) embrace of transposed affection. Winifred's car had been plowed fast to the curb by the passing revolving-eyed behemoths of our town highway department, and she lived only three blocks away, an uphill slog in four inches of fresh snow. She did seem to need to take my arm, but we both stayed wrapped in our own thoughts. The snow drifted down with a steady whisper of its own, and the presence on the streets, at this profoundly nocturnal hour, of the churning, scraping snowplows made an effect of companionship—of a wider party beneath the low sky, which was glowing yellow with that strange, secretive phosphorescence of a snowstorm. The houses were dark, and my porch light grew smaller, receding down the hill. In front of her own door, right under a street lamp, Winifred turned to face me as if, in our muffling clothes, to dance; but it was only to offer her pale, oval, rather frozen and grieving face up to me to kiss, with snowflakes caught in the long lashes of her closed lids and spangling the arc of parted dark hair left exposed by her shawl. I felt the usual arousal. The house behind her held only sleeping children. Its clapboard face, needing a coat of paint, looked a bit shabby, as if betraying the distracted marriage within. There was, in Pierce Junction, a romance of other couples' houses—the merged tastes, the accumulated furniture, the framed photographs going back to the bridal day. We loved being guests and hosts both. Did she expect me to come in? It didn't strike me as at all a feasible idea—at my back, down the hill, Jeanne would be busy tidying up the party wreckage in our living room and resting a despairing eye on the kitchen clock with its sweeping red second hand. Tiny stars of ice clotted my own lashes as I kissed our guest good night, square on the mouth but lightly, lightly, with liquor-glazed subtleties of courteous regret. Of all the kisses I gave and received in Pierce Junction, from children and adults and golden retrievers, that chaste, crystalline one has stuck in my mind.

When I returned to the house, Frank, surprisingly, was sitting in the living room, holding a beer and wearing a rumpled suit, his long face pink as if after great exertion. Jeanne, almost too tired to be flustered, explained, "Frank just got back from his trip, the plane in to the Manchester airport almost didn't land, and when he found Freddy not at their home he thought he'd swing down here and pick her up."

"Up and down that hill in this blizzard?" I marvelled. I didn't remember any car going by.

"We have four-wheel drive," Frank said, as if that explained everything.

MAUREEN could be a raucous tease. Her rangy body was wide but not deep—she had broad hips but shallow breasts—and all summer she bore around the base of her neck a brown loop of sunburn, freckled and flaking, from working in her garden in a peasant blouse and no sun hat. A redhead, she remained loyal to the long, ironed hair of the flower-child era years after the flower children had gone underground or crazy or back to their parents. When I described these events to her, leaving out the odd physiological effect that holding Winifred in my arms always produced, Maureen laughed and tossed her mane as if about to devour me with her prominent white teeth. "Jeanne is incredible," she said. "Imagine setting a date with your boyfriend at one in the morning in the faith that your husband would be off sleeping with the guy's wife! It sounds as though the snowstorm held everything up—that's why she kept egging Freddy to stay."

"I can't believe," I said, as primly as I could while wearing no clothes, propped up in her bed with a cigarette and a glass of rasping dark vermouth, "that things are as cold-blooded and as, as *set-up* as that. My guess is he swung by because he thought the party was still on."

"But he could see there weren't any cars!"

"Ah," I said, in modest triumph,

"Freddy's car *was* out front, plowed in."

"Plowing, that's the theme," Maureen said. " 'If ye had not plowed with my heifer'—what?—'ye had not found out my riddle.' " She and Rodney had met at a summer Bible school, and Rodney still retained the well-combed, boyish shine of a future missionary. "Anyway," she went on gaily, giving the bed such a bounce that I spilled vermouth into the hairs of my chest, where—damn!—Jeanne might smell it, "I can see you feel you let Freddy down, but don't. She's screwing that odious little New York poet, everybody at Bradbury says."

"I wish you wouldn't tell me all this. I'd like to keep some innocence."

"Martin, you *love* it, you love knowing all the dirt," she told me, and nuzzled at the spilled vermouth with a faceless, thrusting, leonine seriousness that rather frightened me. I fought her off by finding her ears in all that hair and using them as handles to pull her head up from my chest. Her face, thus tugged back, with uplifted upper lip and slit eyes, reminded me of Winifred's held to be kissed in the snow, and of a death mask. Maureen's was not one of those female bodies that hid its bones, its lean doomed hunger. Laughing, but hard-eyed, spiteful though playful, she said, "Rodney says you're just like a woman, you're so nosy."

This hurt me and aroused me. Rodney and I were severely discreet, talking about nothing but our mutual activities—golf, poker, tennis, skiing. We didn't even talk politics, at the height of Vietnam and then through Nixon's prolonged downfall. Yet it was stirring, to think of Maureen and Rodney talking about me, in their marital intimacy. "Like a woman, am I?" I said, growling and wrestling her under, to reverse our positions in the bed, that guest-room bed I knew so well, a mahogany four-poster, with removable pineapples topping each post. Maureen's shrieks of resistance and amusement rang through the oak-floored rooms of her Victorian house and out, I feared, into the street.

Pierce Junction was a town of secrets that kept leaking out, like sawdust from a termite-ridden beam. There were all these tiny wormholes, with a flicker of life at the end of each. When Jeanne learned of my affair with Maureen, she reacted with a surge of fury that surprised me, since I had been putting up with her and Frank for years. Unforgivably, she demonstrated her anger by storming over to the Millers and telling Rodney everything. Maureen, with her pious streak, worked Wednesdays and Saturdays at a Methodist home for delinquent children in Concord, and it was the telephone company's efficiency, listing nonlocal calls by town and number, that had given our liaison away. When I try to recall our passion, it comes not with X-rated images of our hours in bed but with a certain dull taste, the madeleine of an especially desolate minute in an idle day, the longing that made me, of a dull and hollow afternoon, insatiably crave the sound of her voice—lower and huskier over the phone, more thoughtfully musical, than it seemed when we were face-to-face. Her voice momentarily pushed aside the sore dread in which I lived in those years; her voice, and its little harsh inspirations of perception, painted the world, which seemed to me rimmed with a vague terror, in bright, fearless colors. Hearing Maureen reassuringly laugh, as if we were all caught in a delicious, precarious joke, was a slaking of a thirst that weighed in my throat like an iron bar. Without her in it somewhere, at least as a voice over the telephone, the world lacked a center. I *had* to talk to her, though the phone bill did us in.

The hunger was not only mine but pervaded our circle with the pathos of unsatisfied need: poor Jeanne and Frank, stealing that silly half hour in the blizzard. Maureen for me was like a campfire whose light made the encircling darkness seem absolute, and whose heat became a sharp chill a few paces from its immediate vicinity.

Jeanne didn't come back from her interview with Rodney for hours. Not immediately, but after some days had worn us down to skeletons of weary honesty, she confessed that, Maureen being absent, she had slept with him, in some delirium of revenge, though he had been reluctant.

"One of Maureen's sadnesses," I told her, "was always that he was so faithful, so satisfied by her. Or so she thought."

"How funny of her. You remember that period when Winifred and Frank were just breaking up, and Freddy was wildly on the make? I was sure she was going to seduce you, that snowy night. Well, Rodney was the only man around here who didn't disappoint her—who lived up to her self-image. Apparently she is very sexy. Rodney said he was rather put off by his sensation that at that point in time—I sound like Nixon—she would fuck anybody. I wish he hadn't told me—even Frank doesn't know, and I hate having a secret from *him*."

"Such beautiful scruples," said I.

"Go ahead, mock. I deserve it, I guess."

"My martyr. My Jeanne in the flames," I said, hardly able to wait until I could take her to bed and discover how new knowledge had enriched her.

Yet we did divorce, in painful piecemeal, as did Maureen and Rodney. I moved to Nashua, but would return to Pierce Junction to visit the children, take Jeanne's temperature, and play my old games. One poker night, rather than letting me drive back to Nashua full of beer, Rodney had me to his bachelor shack, up in the hills, at the end of a mile of dirt road. While waiting for my turn to use the bathroom I saw a note carelessly left on his cluttered desk. The rounded, upright handwriting, with its "a"s oddly like "o"s, struck me as momentously familiar; Audrey Lancaster had been the secretary of a conservation committee I once served on. "Another fool's errand," it read. "Did I misunderstand, or has Friar Lawrence goofed again? Now my van is dusty and my legs full of mosquito bites from an hour on your porch. Some damn bird in your woods was trying to deliver a message in English but couldn't quite make it out of birdsong. Yours, sort of. Yes?" Unsigned. A thumbtack hole where it had been pinned up outside. A blue-lined page torn, with an anger visible in the tearing, from a college notebook. It brought me thrillingly close to Audrey, as close as the night I had rested my palm on her haunch. She had come up that gloomy dirt road through the forest like a big smooth salmon upstream, and ignominiously driven back down again. Her literary allusion seemed more like Winifred, somehow.

When Rodney emerged innocently from the bathroom, wearing little-boy cotton pajamas and a fleck of toothpaste on his chin, I hated him as I never had in those years of entering his house, past his lawnmower and oil cans in the garage, through the kitchen where he gobbled breakfast every day, past the shelf of his golf trophies, toward the mahogany guest bed. While some of us burned on the edges of life, insatiable and straining to see more deeply in, he sat complacently at the center and let life come to him—so much of it, evidently, that he could not keep track of his appointments.

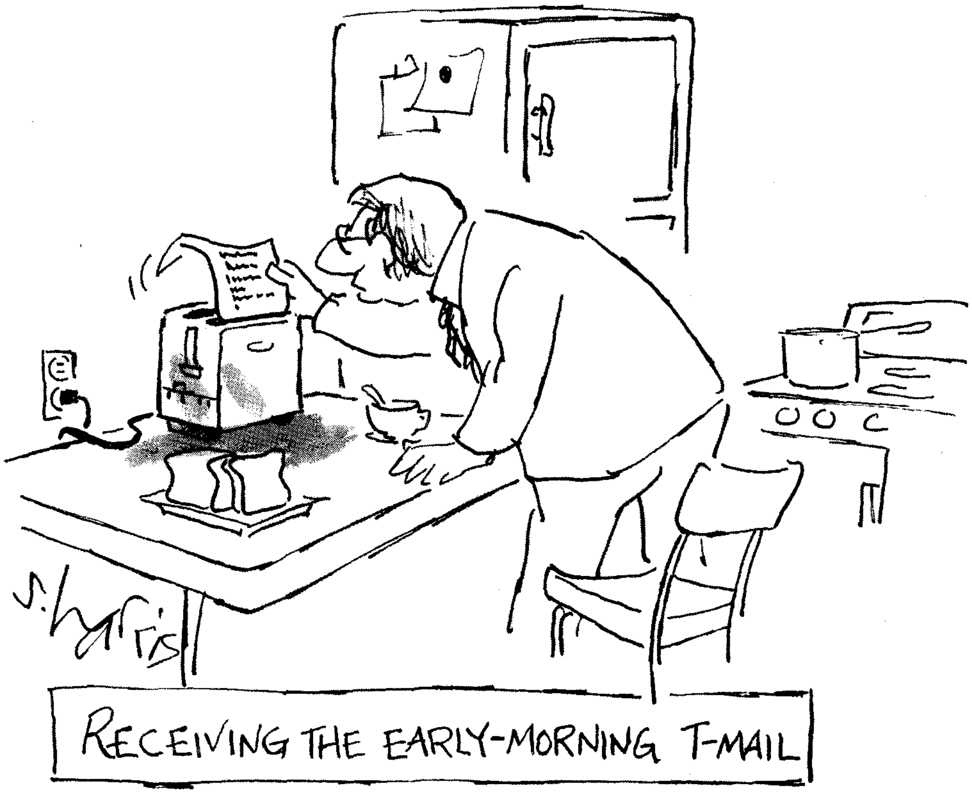
Down in Nashua, as the seventies ran out, I lost track of the ins and outs of life in Pierce Junction. The possibility that Maureen and I might get together on a respectable basis had been early dismissed by her. Too many children, too much financial erosion, too much water over the dam. "Don't you see, Marty?" she told me. "We've *done* it. We'd look at each other and all we'd see would be evidence of our sin."

The quaint last word shocked me with the possibility that she—and Jeanne, and all the women—had been suffering, in our sexual paradise. I felt insulted. So it was with, among other things, a pang of vengeful satisfaction that I heard of her sudden death, in a car driven late at night along Route 202 by, of all people, Spike Lancaster, a beefy, loud, hard-drinking restaurateur whose plain deficiencies had given Audrey, in our little set, a nimbus of long suffering and therefore of excusability. Spike and Audrey had nothing in common but bad eyesight. He, the driver, came out of the crash with minor injuries and a rakish reputation that probably didn't hurt business in his roadside restaurant—called, actually, the Lucky Shamrock.

I could hardly believe that, after sublime us, Maureen could have taken up with this brute, this simpleton. Served her right, getting her neck broken against a dashboard, that slender neck springing with its pulse from a circle of sunburn. These ugly, unworthy thoughts lasted only a second, of course—a lightning flicker of amoral neurons before the gentle rain of decent sadness began. But her death, and this final scandal, with its black skidmarks and shattering safety glass, did shut down Pierce Junction for me. Jeanne and Frank married, and I edged into a second life, with a second wife and new children. My own children continued to grow, went to college, married, and moved away. I had fewer and fewer reasons to return; when I did, the town's geography, little changed, seemed to contain the same old currents, but the wires were different, the faces, and the old wormholes, if they still existed, were out of sight, running through younger lives. The sixties had gone from being the century's age to being ours. When I thought back, to our hectic, somehow sacred heyday, it was, as I say, less in terms of the women closest to me than of those in the middle distance, virginal, who had taken the siren call of the unknown with them as they disappeared over my social horizon.

A mall had sprung up between Nashua and Pierce Junction, on the site of a dairy farm whose silver-tipped silos I still expected to see gleaming at that particular turn of the highway. Instead, there was explosively fragmented glitter—chain stores in postmodern glass skins, and a vast asphalt meadow paved with cars. Intending to buy a grandchild a birthday present at one of those toy emporia with the queerly reversed "R," I was traversing the insistently musical reaches of an enclosed arcade lined with name-brand stores and dotted with underpatronized kiosks offering tinselly jewelry, exotic herbal teas, and candy and yogurt-coated pretzels in cloudy plastic bins, when I saw in the middle distance an unmistakable walk—splay-footed, wary, yet determinedly forward and, to my eyes, enticingly youthful. I ducked into a Gap outlet and, concealed amid sheaves of softened denim and earth-tone turtlenecks, gazed out as Audrey, plumper and gray but still supple, passed. The contact lenses that she was always losing had given way to cheerfully clunky thick glasses. She was squinting and smiling and talking with animation, moving that flexible murmurous wide mouth of hers.

Her pants-wearing companion, with a feathery short white hairdo and a quilted down vest, for a moment seemed a complete stranger, a solemnly pouting miniature man. But then, with a stab of recognition that set off a senile stir of excitement behind my fly and jumped me a step further back from the window, I saw; there was of course no mistaking the barrel-shaped owl body, the hooded dark eyes, the dainty extremities. Winifred. She and Audrey moved with the dreamy, assimilated mutual submission of an old married couple. They were holding hands. ♦



RECEIVING THE EARLY-MORNING T-MAIL

A CRITIC AT LARGE

WONDERLAND

Lewis Carroll and the loves of his life.

BY ADAM GOPNIK

CONTEMPORARY people, it seems, like split personalities just as much as their Romantic predecessors did, though for a different reason. The old cult of the divided self was, at its secret heart, optimistic and expansive, implying that every quality included its opposite, and that anyone could be anything: a tender aesthete might lead the Arabs in revolt; a novelist by day might be a rake by night. We like double people, too (all those stockbroker psychos, all those gender-busting heroines), but our cult of them is pessimistic and is based on the idea that none of us can ever say just what we mean, or be quite what we seem to be. Even the cross-dressers who are now presented as heroes of our time seem less self-expanding than self-exploding, resigning their identities to their nylons.

Of all these double people, none looks more divided than the Reverend Charles Dodgson of Christ Church, Oxford. The "Alice" books he wrote as Lewis Carroll remain, more than a century after their publication, one of the few common repositories of reference; at a time when nobody knows who Damon and Pythias were, everybody still knows where the Walrus and the Carpenter went walking. But Dodgson's supposedly split personality continues to overtake his books as a subject. This week, Robert Wilson launches his multimedia theatre piece "Alice" at the Brooklyn Academy of Music; according to the press release, it will investigate the "curious mind" of a man who "seemed the perfect Victorian Englishman as a clergyman and a well-known mathematician, but was also a compulsive photographer with a strong preference for young girls." Wilson's Dodgson seems likely to repeat the traits of the Dodgson of Dennis Potter's uncharacteristically leering 1985 movie, "DreamChild," in which Dodgson appeared as a pathologically timid and isolated Oxford don, rabbit-shy and stammering, who came alive only in the company of little girls—and was just this side of being a child molester.

The trouble with this emphasis on Dodgson's neurosis is that it obscures the essential sanity of his writing. It also revives the older, sentimental notion that the two "Alice" books really belong to the literature of subversive protest. Only in the guise of children's literature, the homily went, could Carroll attack the horrors of Victorian respectability, and introduce his dream child, and himself, to the stranger, stronger world of irrational forces. (In recent decades, this idea has informed both André Gregory's Grotowskian production of "Alice" and Jonathan Miller's Freudian one.) Wilson's piece threatens to be an updated compendium of all these clichés. "The White Knight, on the one hand, and the Photographer beneath the black cloth, on the other, are two sides of the same person," Wilson says. "Who is to say where the line is drawn that divides protection from harm, or help from exploitation?" A divided Dodgson, these days, seems to demand a broken "Alice."

The best thing about Morton Cohen's "Lewis Carroll: A Biography," which Knopf will publish next month, is that it patiently disassembles most of these myths. The real Dodgson, it turns out, was about as happily engaged in the world around him as any of us can hope to be. If he had some of the Victorian vices, he had almost all the Victorian virtues: energy, drive, moral seriousness, and a limitless self-confidence. He was the leading amateur photographer of the day, at a time when photography, with its heavyweight equipment and endless delays, involved dogged and thick-skinned persistence. Dodgson was also one of the great Victorian correspondents. He kept a register of every personal letter he received and wrote, and by the end of his life was working toward a hundred thousand. These weren't notes, either, but long and inventive letters, full of a stirring Victorian intensity and earnest italics. His regular correspondents included Tennyson and Christina Rossetti; Dodgson wrote familiarly to Lord Salisbury when he was Prime Minister, giving him worldly counsel on the Irish question. People were inclined to take Dodgson seriously on any subject, since he had been a success in practically every enterprise he touched. He got the equivalent of tenure at Christ Church when he was only twenty, at a time when it was the most glamorous of Oxbridge colleges. (Queen Victoria sent two of her sons there.) Those rooms where he received little girls for dinner, which you may have imagined as a furtive donnish hideaway, were among the largest apartments in the entire university. He published the "Alice" books as an entrepreneurial gamble, keeping all the details of production and distribution under his steely control, and made them one of the big publishing successes of the day. He was even a whiz at merchandising—arranging for his "Alice" characters to be turned into cookie tins and postage-stamp cases. He could be shy, but his shyness didn't prevent him from preaching, lecturing, and going out into the world; he was a devoted theatregoer at a time when, as Max Beerbohm wrote of the theatre, "Ministers of even the Church of England were very dubious about it and never attended it." His nephew, who knew him well, believed that the great romantic disappointment of his life might not have been Alice Liddell but, rather, Ellen Terry, one of the stars of the London stage. He was, above all, a public character, of the kind the British enjoy—one of those eccentrics, like J. R. Ackerley or John Betjeman, whose oddities are all out in the open. Even his infatuation with little girls was a public matter, a little like Ackerley's infatuation with his dogs. People wrote to tell him that they thought his

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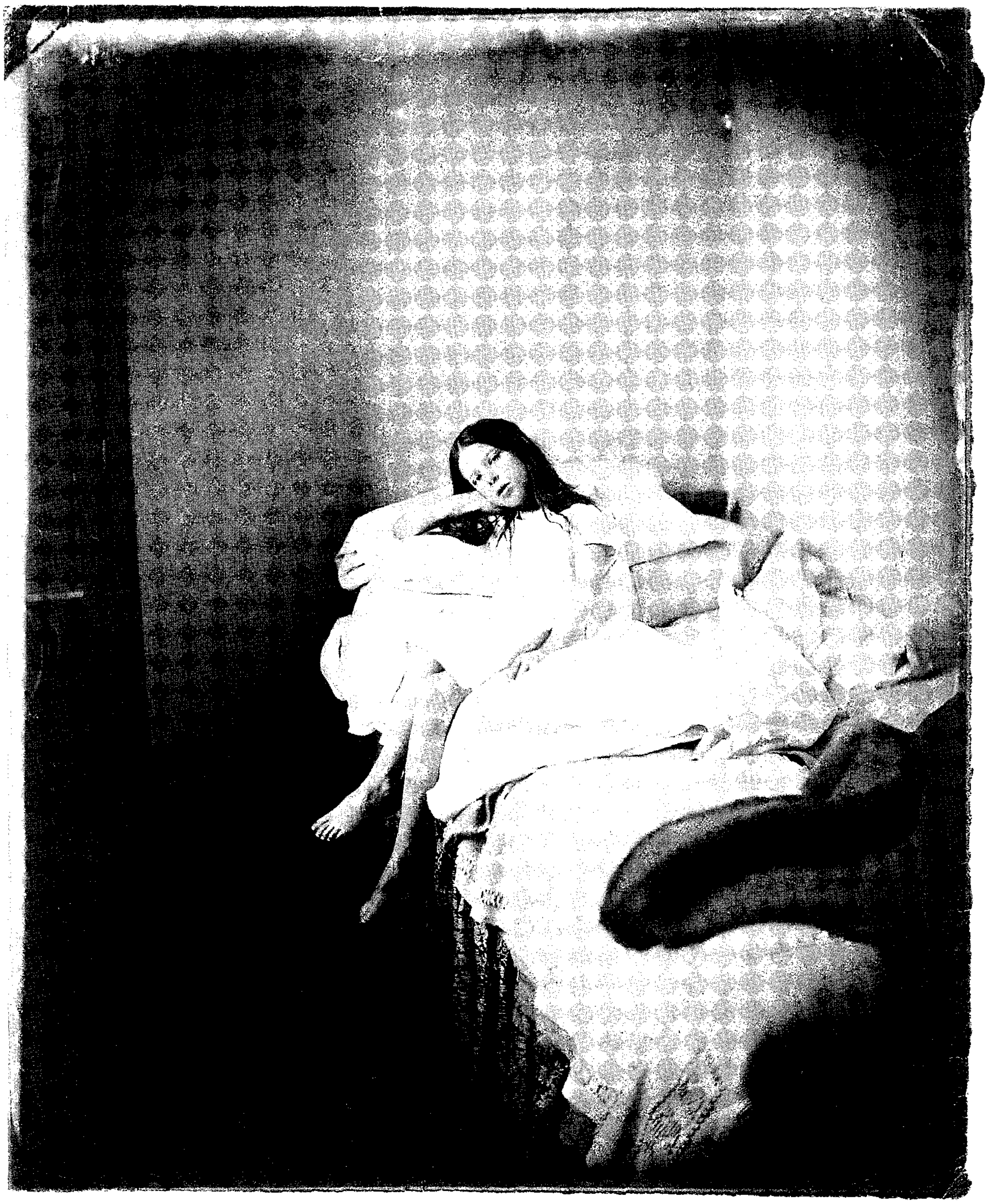


behavior was bizarre, and he wrote back to tell them that they were wrong.

THE new picture of Dodgson is achieved honestly—by the slow accumulation of detail rather than by a willful "rereading." Cohen, a professor emeritus at CUNY, has devoted most of his life to studying Dodgson, and done it with a real scholar's modesty and diligence. He sometimes sounds more Victorian than his subject, but he is a genuine authority on Dodgson, and we are unlikely to need another. Cohen's will remain the indispensable book on the subject. Dodgson, it turns out, was a man with two preoccupations—logic and little girls. He spent most of his life trying to build a bridge between them, and finally succeeded.

Charles Dodgson inhabited an Oxford landscape even before he arrived at Christ Church. He was born in 1832, the eldest son of a man who bore the same name, as well as the wonderfully Carrollian title of Perpetual Curate of Daresbury. The Oxford Movement—John Henry Newman's attempt, beginning in the eighteen-twenties, to restore quasi-Roman ritual and a sense of supernatural authority to the prosaic Church of England—had colored the elder Dodgson's life. Unwilling to go all the way over to Rome, Charles, Sr., took up the discouraging compromise called "ritualism," in which the ceremonies of the Church were made much of, without going over to the Romish belief that they actually meant something. On the

Above: Carroll's "Julia Arnold, Seated on Unmade Bed," c. 1872.

whole, Charles, Jr., had a marvellously happy childhood, as the oldest and superintending brother of a large, jubilant family; he published the first stanza of "Jabberwocky" in a "newspaper" he used to put out for his brothers and sisters.

He arrived at Christ Church in 1850, and stayed there for nearly fifty years. A little to his own surprise, he turned out to have a brilliant head for logic and mathematics, and though he eventually took divine orders, he found his calling as a lecturer in math. After five years, he was made a don—an extraordinary achievement even in that less regimented academic time—and he remained a formidable figure at Oxford throughout his life. From the beginning, though, he had a sense of the absurdity of academic ritual. Soon after becoming a lecturer, he wrote to his siblings, back home, an "Alice"-like version of Oxford pedagogy:

> My one pupil has begun his work with me, and I will give you a description how the lecture is conducted. It is the most important point, you know, that the tutor should be *dignified*, and at a distance from the pupil, and that the pupil should be as much as possible *degraded*—otherwise you know, they are not humble enough. So I sit at the further end of the room; outside the door (*which is shut*) sits the scout; outside the outer door (*also shut*) sits the sub-scout; halfway down stairs sits the sub-sub-scout; and down in the yard sits the *pupil*.

Christ Church may have been a glamorous place, but, like every other Victorian institution, it was thought, in some vague way, to be in need of reform. When the old presiding dean of the college died, in 1855, a reformer was brought in from outside not just the college (which would have been unusual enough) but the university itself. This was Henry George Liddell, the author of a famous Greek lexicon, and his idea of reform involved turning the college from a genteel clergymen's retreat into something more along the lines of a modern, German-style university.

So the great private event of Dodgson's life—the arrival of Dean Liddell and his family—was also its great public event. Dodgson disapproved of the new regimentation of Christ Church life that Liddell ushered in (he particularly hated the new system of competitive examinations), and for the next thirty years he opposed the Dean's innovations with a series of comic pamphlets. Once, for instance, Dean Liddell allowed a new, meekly geometric belfry to go up on the cathedral at Christ Church. Two chapters of Dodgson's pamphlet ran, in their entirety, as follows:

> 4. *On the chief architectural merit of the new Belfry, Ch.Ch.*
>
> Its chief merit is its simplicity—a simplicity so pure, so profound, in a word, so *simple*, that no other word will fitly describe it. The meagre outline, and baldness of detail, of the present Chapter, are adopted in humble imitation of this great feature.
>
> 5. *On the other architectural merits of the new Belfry, Ch.Ch.*
>
> The Belfry has no other architectural merits.

But he couldn't resist the Dean's family. He spent years opposing the Dean and pursuing his daughters. At the time, the Dean had three: Lorina, Alice, and the baby, Edith. When Dodgson first met Alice, she was a week shy of four, and for a long time he seemed to divide his attention equally among the girls. It was not until six years later, when Alice was turning ten, that he became exclusively infatuated with her. Dodgson began pursuing her through a long series of summer-afternoon engagements (croquet games, boating parties, picnics in Christ Church meadow) attended by all three girls, which climaxed with the famous expedition on July 4, 1862, when he told them the story of the little girl who fell down the rabbit hole, and Alice asked him to write it down. He did, though it took him almost a year to start, and in the spring of 1863 he began a manuscript entitled "Alice's Adventures Under Ground." It was a love offering, which he had no plans to publish.

THEN, almost immediately after he began writing his book for her, Dodgson was banned from the Liddells' house. It is hard to be sure what happened: after his death, his niece cut out his diary pages for the days just before he was excluded from the deanery. The first certain thing that emerges from the record, seen whole, is that the eleven-year-old Alice Liddell was not an improbable object of even a thoroughly unneurotic man's attentions. Everyone assumes, in writing about Alice and Charles, that the emphasis should be on his neuroses, projections, and so forth. On the evidence, there was nothing particularly odd about it. Alice Liddell seems to have been a kind of pint-size Zuleika Dobson: a girl *everyone* in Oxford fell in love with sooner or later. She was no ordinary little girl—as Dodgson's unforgettable picture of her as "The Beggar Maid" shows. In the photograph, she is a young girl of precocious wisdom and a Lulu-like coldness—a disdainful arrogance that is still shocking to see in a Victorian child. (Dodgson's photographs of Alice Liddell, in fact, are among the most moving examples of that Victorian preoccupation *la belle dame sans merci.*) Ruskin, a lifelong friend of the Liddells', was so overwhelmed by young Alice that he wrote longingly about her in his autobiography. When the Queen sent her fourth son, Leopold, up to Christ Church, *he* fell desperately in love with Alice Liddell, too, and was prevented from marrying her only by the Queen's intercession. Dodgson, who was in his early thirties, may simply have had the bad luck to fall in love with an amazing woman who happened to be eleven. The Alice we know is not a neurotic's projection onto a passive object but an artist's tribute to a remarkable woman, albeit a very small one.

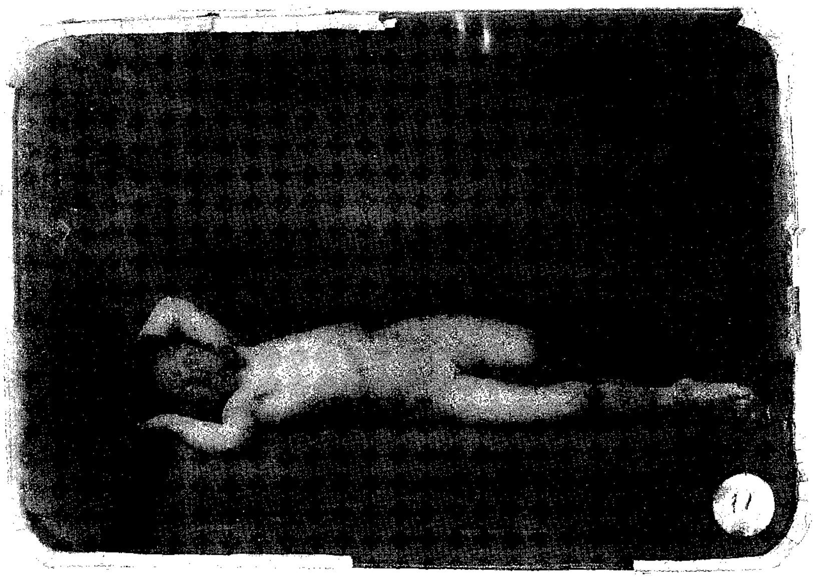
That he was in love with her no one disputes, and that she was intrinsically lovable no one should dispute. But what, exactly, did that mean? "If this is taken to mean that he wanted to marry her or make love to her, there is not the slightest evidence for it," Martin Gardner (whose "The Annotated Alice" is still the best commentary on the books) wrote a generation ago. Cohen thinks that he wanted to do both. With a dogged but useful pedantry, Cohen has tabulated Dodgson's references in his private diaries to himself as a man consumed by sin, and points out that they cluster around the time of his most frequent visits with the Liddell girls. Three weeks after the famous July 4th expedition, in fact, he actually put off preaching a sermon because "till I can rule myself better, preaching is but a solemn mockery—'thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?' God grant this may be the last such entry I may have to make! that so I may not, when I have preached to others, be myself a castaway."

Victorian standards of sin were different from ours—Cardinal Manning's diary used to record the same kind of breast-beating when he had eaten too much cake—but Cohen says that "it is naïve to insist that Charles's troubled conscience stemmed solely from professional shortcomings or indolence." This clearly wasn't just conventional piety but real pain, and with a point. Further evidence that Dodgson wanted Alice, and knew it, is a poem he wrote, around the time of his infatuation with her, in which a sub-Tennysonian youth has sex with a quasi-Tennysonian maiden, who then turns into a withered old hag.

But it's likely that Dodgson declared his passion as openly as he could, and that his hope that he might be able to make that love legitimate was not nearly so unrealistic in its day as it may seem now. For, as Cohen reveals, there were *two* Dodgsons in love with little girls named Alice during the eighteen-sixties. Charles's brother Wilfred was in love with a fourteen-year-old named Alice Donkin—and that romance, on the surface only a little more plausible than Charles's, ended happily. Wilfred waited a few years and then married her. The brothers exchanged confidences about their loves; three years after his contretemps with the Liddells, Charles dined twice with his uncle Skeffington Lutwidge, and noted in his diary, "On each occasion we had a good deal of conversation about Wilfred, and about A.L. It is a very anxious subject."

Eleven is not fourteen, of course, but then Charles could simply have waited for A.L. a little longer. (Victorian mores accepted such marriages easily: the future Archbishop of Canterbury, E. W. Benson, proposed to *his* love when she was only twelve.) Cohen imagines that Alice might at some point have playfully said, "I'm going to marry Mr. Dodgson," and that this casual remark may have led the Dean and his wife to throw Dodgson out. But one wonders if Cohen isn't underestimating the strength of Dodgson's passion, and his moral seriousness. Given what was apparently his advice to Wilfred—propose, and then propose to wait—it seems much likelier that Dodgson suggested a similar Elvis-and-Priscilla arrangement to the Liddells. Mrs. Liddell's outrage may say less about her virtues as a mother than about her calculations as a marriage broker. She was an appalling snob, who wanted a more aristocratic suitor for her daughter. Dodgson, though a rising don, was still only a don. That something like this—something open rather than covert—happened seems confirmed by a letter that Lord Salisbury wrote to his wife years later: "They say that Dodgson has half gone out of his mind in consequence of having been refused by the real Alice. It looks like it."

Two things about these events matter for lovers of the "Alice" books. The first is that the peculiar strength of Alice's character in the books—and she is one of the few completely sane, self-assertive, and undamaged female characters in English fiction created between Jane Austen and Virginia Woolf—comes out of the strength of a particular person. Alice is a portrait, not a projection. The other is that the curious melancholy and beautiful pathos of the books reflect the fact that by the time Dodgson had written them that forceful person had passed out of his life for good. The "Alice" books weren't really written for her; they were written about her.



From top: Alice Liddell, c. 1859; Evelyn Hatch, c. 1879; Julia and Ethel Arnold, c. 1872.

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DODGSON'S unhappy love for Alice Liddell unleashed in him a taste for prepubescent girls. It was only after that, for instance, that he began to take nudes of other little girls. (He seems never to have photographed Alice nude.) Soon, though, his desire to take nudes of little girls came to verge on the obsessive; and his letters directed in this pursuit are not, for those of us who love his work, very nice to read. They go a long way toward explaining his reputation as a dirty old man, if an incautious, recklessly extroverted one.

On one occasion, he wrote to the father of a trio of girls—Ethel Mayhew, who was six or seven, Janet, who was around eleven, and Ruth, who was already in her teens—whom he wanted to photograph nude. "The permission to go as far as bathing-drawers is very charming, as I presume it includes *Ethel* as well as Janet," Dodgson wrote, with cajoling aplomb, and he continues:

> I can make some charming groups of Ethel and Janet in bathing-drawers, though I cannot exaggerate how much better they would look without. Also the bathing-drawers would enable me to do a full front view of Ethel, which of course could not be done without them: but why should you object to my doing a *back* view of her without them? It would be a *perfectly* presentable picture, and far more artistic than with them.

He goes on to say that he had already asked two of the girls about doing nude photography and that "both Ruth and Ethel seemed quite sure that *Janet* wouldn't object in the least to being done naked, and Ethel, when I asked her if *she* would object, said in the most simple and natural way, that she wouldn't object at all." He concludes, "If the worst comes to the worst, and you won't concede any nudities at all, I think you ought to allow *all three* to be done in bathing-drawers, to make up for my disappointment!" Then, in a postscript, he writes that he would much rather that Mrs. Mayhew not come along for the session.

This must have been—in its breathlessness and slightly unhinged detail (all those bathing-drawers!), and even in its inevitable reference to "artistic" needs—a creepy letter for a parent to get. Surprisingly, the Mayhews reacted mildly, granting Dodgson permission to do the pictures on condition that Mrs. Mayhew come along, though Dodgson—overreacting from guilt?—wrote back a desperately painful, hurt, and humiliated letter: "I should have no pleasure in doing any such pictures, now that I *know* I am not thought fit for such a privilege except on condition of being under chaperonage."

Nowadays, of course, a photographer with Dodgson's tastes would be in jail, or else doing a Calvin Klein campaign. Yet the mothers, or most of them, continued to send him little girls, and Dodgson continued to take their pictures, and nobody seems to have suffered at all. For almost a century, Dodgson's nudes were thought to have been lost; Dodgson had most of the negatives destroyed. Cohen has found four of them, and they are reprinted in his book. Hand-colored by professional artists, with Pre-Raphaelite landscapes brushed in, they are less intensely realized than one had hoped they would be—though, at least in the case of Dodgson's "full frontal" of Evelyn Hatch, explicit enough to get one kicked off America Online. For all their immersion in the properties and stage scenery of what we have been taught to call Victorian sentimentality, the girls emerge as something more than exploited objects. Alice Liddell had seemed scarily older than her years; Dodgson's eye, trained on his first love, saw the Alice in all her successors, but he saw their innocence, too. They are granted their sexuality without being deprived of their childhood. These days, we assume that to grant sexuality is to end childhood: the real scandal about Calvin Klein's kids is not how young they look but how *old*.

Lewis Carroll (Charles Dodgson) in 1863, the year he began to write "Alice's Adventures Under Ground."

BETTMANN ARCHIVE

In a curious way, the sentimentality of the Victorians, for which they are still maligned, allowed Dodgson to express his passion without ruining his life. He came up with a public explanation for his private obsession—that it was the little girls' "innocent unconsciousness" that he loved, and that his was a chaste passion—and the interesting thing is that his claim to innocence was true, or became true. He *didn't* molest his child friends, and they universally remembered him with affection. From the social point of view—which is to say, from the point of view of the little girls—Dodgson's passion *was* innocent.

Today, we would insist that any college don who wanted to take pictures of naked little girls was just a pervert, and we would drive him out of the school and into the tabloid press ("OXFORD DON IN KIDDIE-PORN RING"). We know, or think we do, that there is no such thing as an innocent passion for the bodies of young children. Yet, reflecting on Dodgson's life (and photographs), one can't help feeling that the Victorian tendency to compartmentalize the passions had its humane side, too. The Victorians genuinely believed that a passion could be snipped off at its roots and then, so to speak, brought indoors and placed in a glass of water, like a cut flower. They recognized a low passion for little girls' bodies, but they also believed that there was an innocent passion for little girls' bodies, where we would insist that the innocent passion was just the evil passion in bathing-drawers. The Victorians' tastes may have been a little unreal, but in some ways they were much more tolerant than we are. The Victorians may have been hypocrites, but they were not hysterics. Dodgson's appetite could at least still be acknowledged to exist, if only in some unreal, free-floating form—like the Cheshire Cat.

Dodgson's conviction of his own essential rectitude also allowed him to see his subjects as something more than a reflection of his obsessions. One of the virtues of his photographs of little girls is that they are not too pious. What makes most of the new, sexually charged pictures of children so depressing isn't that they are erotic but that they are so impersonal: coarsely dehumanized in the case of the Calvin Klein–Steven Meisel variety; pointedly abstract in the case of the Sally Mann art version. If we compare Dodgson with Mann, for instance, the odd thing is that it is the Victorian moralist who seems able to look at his subjects for their own sake, while in the postmodern pictures we are conscious that a point is always being sought. Dodgson turned a sin into a sentiment, and then turned a sentiment into a portrait; Sally Mann turns the breaking of a taboo into another kind of piety, and does it over and over again. The new pictures and books want to argue that the child's real sexuality is being ignored, denied, repressed, and that the photographer or writer is merely the therapeutic enabler. So what emerges is just that pre-fab "sexuality," a pinched and forlorn self-consciousness. Though we are obsessed with the sexuality of children, we are no longer able to do credit, as Dodgson could, to the real libidinal energy of children, as opposed to their mimicry of the grown-up kind. Looking even at a fully clothed photograph of Dodgson's, like that of the recumbent, smoldering Irene MacDonald, one feels that the picture is as much hers as his. She reminds us that sexiness at least resides in people, even small ones, while "sexuality" resides in categories.

AFTER the drama of the Alice incidents, accounts of Dodgson's life grow a bit becalmed. By the eighteen-seventies, Dodgson had become a tycoon of whimsy. He published the first "Alice" book—"Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," an elaborated version of his love offering—in 1865, when the real Alice was a teen-ager. "Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There" was published in 1871; Alice Liddell saw it only after it appeared in the bookstores.

The Alice of the John Tenniel woodcuts looks nothing like her original. We have become so accustomed to Tenniel's illustrations as dry counterpoint to Carroll's genius that it is hard to remember that Tenniel was incomparably the more famous of the two men when they first collaborated. Tenniel, in fact, was the most fashionable and formidable political cartoonist of the day, and the idea of his illustrating a children's book—much less one by an Oxford don famous only in Oxford—was as improbable as the idea of Garry Trudeau's illustrating a kids' book by an unknown professor now. But Dodgson recognized that he needed Tenniel's sharpness of vision to illustrate his fantasy, and it was a sign of his extraordinary doggedness that he pursued a reluctant Tenniel again to illustrate "Through the Looking-Glass," until the cartoonist at last agreed to coöperate, and wearily insured his own immortality.

From the first, everyone saw that the "Alice" books were perfect. "A glorious artistic treasure," one early reviewer declared. The books had sold a hundred and twenty thousand copies by 1885, and, since Dodgson had decided to publish them himself, using all his own capital, this meant—in a looking-glass reversal that will be dear to the heart of any author—that he kept ninety per cent of the money and gave his publisher ten per cent. He used the money to support his family, and to take long vacations by the shore at Eastbourne, where he could troll for little girls.

The conventional reading of the "Alice" books, which Cohen continues, depicts them as quest stories. They are about the achievement of maturity: Alice undergoes ordeals and so achieves a new wisdom. But in fact Alice's is not a growing-up story. She learns nothing: she's already the most mature person in Wonderland when she arrives. She just experiences it all, and, at the end, she doesn't say "There's no place like home" but just "I can't stand this any longer!"

The details that Cohen marshals allow us to find in Dodgson's life a context of events which helps illuminate his art. For there's a straightforward sense in which the two processes that Cohen describes—the transformation of Oxford life and the nature of Dodgson's love for little girls—help throw at least a slanting light on what makes the books so good.

One process, which Cohen describes but whose significance he doesn't elaborate on, is the growth of the university and, with it, the birth of modern intellectual life. Dodgson's forty-eight years at Christ Church saw the transformation of Oxford from what was essentially a theological seminary with a finishing school for the wealthy attached into something like a modern univer-

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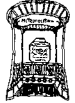

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sity—a place where people go to talk about ideas. Dodgson not only witnessed this change but, for all his contentious ambivalence, was part of it. At the beginning of his career, he is still a learned parson, a figure from the world of Sydney Smith. By its end, in the eighteen-nineties, he is writing his books about logic and corresponding with the Cambridge circle, and we are in the world of Bertrand Russell. Dodgson began as a mathematician, repeating axioms to undergraduates; he ended as a formal logician, publishing in *Mind* paradoxes that showed, in ways that anticipate Gödel and Wittgenstein, how easily rational argument tends to rebound on itself.

Dodgson hated the most obvious signs of modernization—the new architecture of Christ Church, the cult of competitive exams, the secularization of learning. Yet he helped lead a revolt of the younger faculty to reform the Constitution of Christ Church. And when it came to the new ideas themselves he was, especially for a clergyman, remarkably open-minded. After Darwin published "The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals," Dodgson wrote to him offering to collaborate on a new volume, to which he would contribute photographs.

HALLEY'S COMET

Miss Murphy in first grade
wrote its name in chalk
across the board and told us
it was roaring down the storm tracks
of the Milky Way at frightful speed
and if it wandered off its course
and smashed into the earth
there'd be no school tomorrow.
A red-bearded preacher from the hills
with a wild look in his eyes
stood in the public square
at the playground's edge
proclaiming he was sent by God
to save every one of us,
even the little children.
"Repent, ye sinners!" he shouted,
waving his hand-lettered sign.
At supper I felt sad to think
that it was probably
the last meal I'd share
with my mother and my sisters;
but I felt excited, too,
and scarcely touched my plate.
So Mother scolded me
and sent me early to my room.
The whole family's asleep now
except for me. They never heard me steal
into the stairwell hall and climb
the ladder to the fresh night air.

Look for me, Father, on the roof
of the red-brick building
at the foot of Green Street—
that's where we live, you know, on the top floor.
I'm the boy in the white flannel gown
sprawled on this coarse gravel bed
searching the starry sky,
waiting for the world to end.

—Stanley Kunitz

More important, Dodgson discovered a new comic subject: people who were trying to find out about the world just by thinking about it. The folly of the supposed wise was an ancient subject, of course, but Carroll's characters—the White Knight, Humpty Dumpty, the White Queen, the Mad Hatter and the March Hare—are intellectuals in what was then a new sense: people who like to come up with chains of abstract logical reasoning for their own sake, just to see where they will lead. Even the White Knight, the inventor, is engaged—as you find in his discussion of the pudding he invented during the meat course (made of blotting paper, sealing wax, and gunpowder)—in pure research. "In fact," the Knight says, "I don't believe that pudding ever *was* cooked! In fact, I don't believe that pudding ever *will* be cooked! And yet it was a very clever pudding to invent.") Or there is the less familiar Professor in Carroll's later "Sylvie and Bruno," who designs boots the tops of which are open umbrellas. "In *ordinary* rain," the professor admits, "they would *not* be of much use. But if ever it rained *horizontally*, you know, they would be invaluable—simply invaluable!" Throughout "Sylvie and Bruno," the source of the humor is made explicit: *all* the comic figures are professors, explicitly identified as such, and the maddest of all is a German professor called Mein Herr. It was, in particular, the influence of German philosophical idealism, which had exactly the same kind of prestige then that French post-structuralism has now, that Dodgson thought was absurd. In one of his anti-Liddell pamphlets he has a professor say, "For now-a-days all that is good comes from the German. . . . No learned man doth now talk, or even so much as cough, save only in German. The time has been, I doubt not, when an honest English 'Hem!' was held enough, both to clear the voice and rouse the attention of the company, but now-a-days no man of Science, that setteth any store by his good name, will cough otherwise than thus, *Ach! Euch! Auch!*" "Alice in Wonderland" and "Through the Looking-Glass" are descriptions of the new world in which people are trying to make ideas do the work of experience.

In fact, Carroll never really wrote "nonsense"—save "Jabberwocky," and even that gets explained by Humpty Dumpty. Everyone's ideas in the Looking Glass world are not only sensible but strictly logical: the White King's remark about using hay as a palliative for fainting ("I didn't say there was nothing *better*," he says. "I said there was nothing *like* it"); Humpty Dumpty's insistence on the literalness of conversations; the Hatter's riddle with no answer. Just by casting these lines of pure reasoning, Dodgson anticipated not just the shape but many of the sounds of intellectual fashions yet to come.

The flow of imagination and free-form logic is irresistible, but Carroll also sees its limits. "We're all mad here," the Cheshire Cat says, and they are. The "Alice" books are about what happens when you let thinking do away with sense. What Dodgson saw as the corrective to the folly of trying to live by thought wasn't beautiful intuition or irrational passion; it was the common sense of a well-brought-up little girl who sees things as they are. The books are written from the point of view of the dysfunctional intellectual—Dodgson was one himself—but with an understanding that it is better to have a little bit of real life than any amount of pure reason. What makes the books so cheering is that Alice's common sense keeps winning out; what makes them touching is that Dodgson understood that any well-brought-up little girl was more deeply *dans le vrai* than he would ever be. Alice is that honest English "Hem!"

This, I think, helps to explain the popularity of the "Alice" books, long after many of their references and jokes have become antiquated. (Booksellers say they are still among the strongest-selling children's books.) The abstract jokes don't appeal to children, but Alice does. They don't identify with her confusion; they identify with her confidence. Even if you don't see the object of the satire, the purpose is plain. Grown-ups, who appreciate the paradoxes, think they are getting the point;

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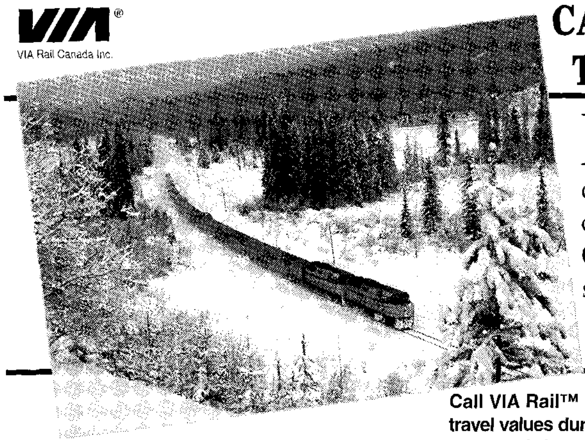

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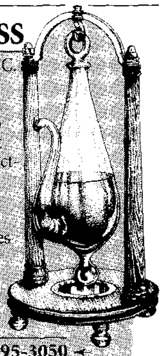

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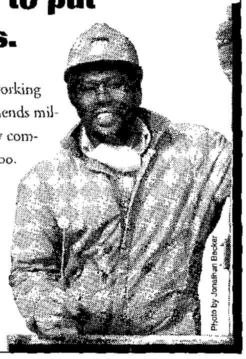

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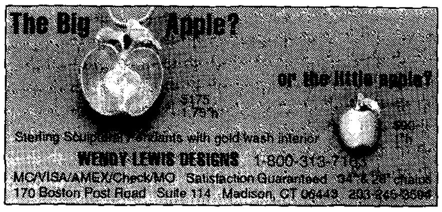

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YESTERDAY IN THIS SPACE I PREDICTED THAT THE WORLD WOULD COME TO AN END. IT DID NOT, HOWEVER. I REGRET ANY INCONVENIENCE THIS MAY HAVE CAUSED.

• •

children, who appreciate Alice's impatience with them, get the point.

DODGSON had—unusually for a writer—good last years instead of sad ones. Cohen views him as a heroic rather than a neurotic figure, and, to the extent that a heroic figure is just a neurotic who fights it, he was. He spent several years, and an enormous amount of even his unquenchable energy, as the Curator of the Christ Church Common Room—a job that was essentially that of head caterer. He devoted the same intelligence to the fine points of champagne and port that he had devoted to photography and logic. His pamphlet, "Twelve Months in a Curatorship by One Who Has Tried It," is still funny: "The consumption of Madeira (B) has been, during the past year, zero. . . . After careful calculation, I estimate that, if this rate of consumption be steadily maintained, our present stock will last us an infinite number of years." He spent most of his later years working on two long, strange novels, "Sylvie and Bruno" and "Sylvie and Bruno Concluded." They were commercial failures, and it is hard even now to master their mixture of piety and brilliant satire. The real failure of the "Sylvie and Bruno" books is that Sylvie is so much less interesting than Alice. She is a simpering fairy princess, where Alice had been a real girl.

Dodgson died in 1898. In the end, his split personality seems earned. If he was a double man, it was for the best of reasons: he saw twice as much as other people did. The Looking Glass people convince us that abstract thought need not be tedious; Alice convinces us that common sense need not be charmless. It has become commonplace to see Dodgson as the crucial influence on the fantastic and anti-natural strains in twentieth-century writing. Yet surely the figure of Alice herself has affected the novel as much as the satirical parts of the "Alice" books have affected the anti-novel. Mrs. Dalloway, in her open-eyed, polite registering of a world gone mad, is unthinkable without the example of Alice, and so are the knowing heroines of Stevie Smith and, more recently, Cathleen Schine's polite, ironic observers. It sometimes seems as if all literary-minded women see themselves, sooner or later, as Alice, just as literary-minded men have always seen themselves as Hamlet. (Men choose Hamlet because every man sees himself as a disinherited monarch; women choose Alice because every woman sees herself as the only reasonable creature among crazy people who think that they are disinherited monarchs.) Mark Twain once called Dodgson his "dream-brother," and it is surely the case that Huck and Alice, the hero and heroine of the two best children's books of the nineteenth century, have become models for heroes and heroines of grown-up books in the twentieth century. The modern novel, with a stream of consciousness as its only order, needed an idea of the wise, reflecting innocent who experiences things without being transformed by them. Huck just moves on. Alice just wakes up.

Dodgson's last work was an elegant, incomplete logical proof of the impossibility of the doctrine of hell. At the end of one of those long, absurd sequences of logic there might be laughter, but beyond that, it seemed, there might be Truth—or even God. The religious doubts of his time all turned on the question of how you could have faith in an absurd universe, a world without order. If chance was built into the nature of things, as Darwin had proved, and if an attempt to renew order could lead only to anachronism and absurdity (as the Oxford Movement had proved), what was left? Gaiety and good manners, the "Alice" books suggest: turning your toes out while you walk; looking squarely at a slant world. Dodgson died regretting that he hadn't been able to finish a book that would "treat some of the religious difficulties of the day from a logical point of view." But he didn't have to worry. He had already written it, twice. ♦

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RECOMMENDED READING

The Queen of the Tambourine
by Jane Gardam
(St. Martin's; $20.95)

This hallucinatory shimmy of a novel won England's Whitbread Award in 1991. It consists of a series of letters written by Eliza Peabody, a "very Senior Diplomatic Wife," to an acquaintance who fled their affluent suburb without warning. Now Eliza's husband has also fled, and her eccentricities are alarming her very proper neighbors; the reader begins to wonder whether some of the characters in her letters aren't just that. Is there really a children's-book writer named Pixie Leak, author of "Your First Bra" and winner of the Queen Mab Shield and the Elfin Goblet? Are little Mick and Perry really named after Gorbachev and perestroika, and does Eliza really try to drown Mick after feeding him six chocolate éclairs?

Citizen Sherman
by Michael Fellman
(Random House; $30)

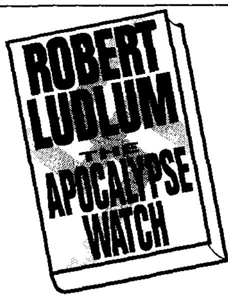
William Tecumseh Sherman was many things: a brilliant general, a scrupulous (and unsuccessful) businessman, a tormented husband, a self-promoter, a loving and vulnerable father, a racist. Taking advantage of the extensive surviving correspondence of the Sherman family (and also of letters that Sherman's mistresses were urged to destroy but kept), this superb biography gives as full a portrait of nineteenth-century family dynamics as of the dynamics of the battlefield. Fellman's Sherman is not a lovable man, but he is a complete one.

An Italian Education
by Tim Parks
(Grove; $22)

"Don't be so fiscal, Daddy," says the Italian-born Michele to the author, his British father, as a protest against bedtime. "Fiscal" is from *fiscale*—colloquially translated, "exacting," "bureaucratic." To have a child in any circumstance is to enter a subculture; Parks has made a wry, thoughtful, and often hilarious book from his experience of shepherding his offspring through their "foreign" childhood—a parable of how our children, no matter what, are other than ourselves.

Hiroshima Notes
by Kenzaburo Oe;
translated from the Japanese by
David L. Swain and Toshi Yonezawa
(Marion Boyars; $22.95)

In 1963, the Japanese novelist Kenzaburo Oe, winner of last year's Nobel Prize in Literature, visited Hiroshima for the first time, to report on an international anti-nuclear peace rally. These essays (first published in Japan in 1965) describe what he observed then and during subsequent visits, as he met bomb survivors and their doctors, who were often sick themselves—people "who did not commit suicide in spite of everything." His precise, reflective account is both agonizing and inspiring.



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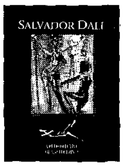

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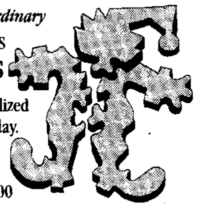

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DANCING

THE SHOW GOES ON

A great Balanchine ballerina stages a week of dance in Washington.

BY ARLENE CROCE

SUZANNE FARRELL is working in Washington. Since mid-September, she has been rehearsing dancers for "Suzanne Farrell Stages Balanchine," which opens a weeklong engagement at the Kennedy Center on October 17th. With two different programs of works identified with Farrell, ranging from "Mozartiana" to "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue," and from "Chaconne" to "Tzigane," the week should go far toward explaining why for a quarter of a century she was Balanchine's most important dancer—the one who led New York City Ballet until her retirement, in 1989, and who many think should be leading it now, as artistic director. Before Balanchine died, in 1983, Maria Tallchief told an interviewer, "To my mind, the dancer who knows as much about Balanchine today as *anybody* is Suzanne Farrell. This lady knows exactly what Balanchine wants. Suzanne is a great dancer now, and one day she is going to be a great, great teacher."

At that time, Farrell thought she'd be working with Peter Martins, the man who succeeded Balanchine. When Martins fired her, two years ago, she was shocked but not surprised: Martins had let it be known that her services were not wanted. Since then, she has intensified her efforts on behalf of Balanchine's work, travelling about the world, teaching his ballets and his philosophy, and becoming one of the Balanchine Trust's most sought-after representatives. She has never done anything quite like the Washington showcase, however, and neither has anyone else. The idea that some may view it as a threat to Martins' authority does not faze Farrell. "I'm not issuing threats or challenges—I'm doing my work," she says. "These are all ballets I know well; most of them were made on me. I'm staging them somewhere in the world all year long—why not Washington? The Kennedy Center was important to Balanchine; his company used to give regular seasons here. And I've been coming here for three summers now, teaching a course in technique as he taught it to me. I guess it's

WENDY WILSON

Suzanne Farrell: "What I do isn't just for me, it's for Mr. B. And the dancers."

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been successful, because now I've been asked to teach some ballets. Could I refuse?"

Farrell's week is a one-shot deal, not a pilot project for a new company. She has no wish to start a company, she says. She also has no wish not to start one. "If having a company were feasible, and if it meant that I could do my job better, I would have a company. Whatever it takes to advance Balanchine's work, especially with young dancers who don't know it—that is what I'll do." Has she fulfilled Tallchief's prophecy and become a great, great teacher—someone spoken of with the reverence her own generation reserves for Oboukhoff and Doubrovska, Vera Volkova and Stanley Williams? To me, the fact that she's forged a new career speaks for itself. Suzanne Farrell, prima ballerina assoluta, whom even her admirers saw as a law unto herself, has made a complete transition from the stage to the classroom. By a strange coincidence, while Farrell rehearses in Washington, "Master Class" is at the Kennedy Center—a new play by Terrence McNally about Maria Callas's sessions at Juilliard. Although as performers the two women were often compared, no one could be less like the pathetic monster McNally makes of Callas than Farrell. She doesn't teach "Farrellisms," doesn't perform in front of her students or go on ego trips at their expense. The former N.Y.C.B. ballerina Maria Calegari, whom Farrell has invited to dance "Monumentum/Movements" and "Tzigane" in Washington, took Farrell's classes this summer. Calegari hadn't taken a Balanchine class in years, and at first, she says, her muscles were really hurting. "But after two weeks I had *legs*. I could use my back. Suzanne is very methodical. She keeps everything in proportion. You are always articulating energy, using only as much as is necessary to your purpose. Suzanne remembers what many people do not, and her class is not like anyone else's. It reminds me of the exercises a musician would need to practice in order to play Mozart or Beethoven."

The principal roles in Farrell's season will be taken by dancers who, like Calegari, have already learned them from her. Her former home company is lending Hélène Alexopoulos and Peter Boal. ("I wrote to Peter Martins and Jerome Robbins for permission," Farrell says, "and got a sweet note back from Jerry wishing me success.") For corps work and supporting roles, Farrell is relying on the Washington Ballet, a venerable institution with which she has had no previous contact. When I visited her last month at the company's studios, she was teaching the demi couples in "Chaconne." In her thin pullover and chiffon skirt, and with her hair pulled back in a ponytail, Farrell looked girlishly energetic (she turned fifty in August) as she seized hands and hauled the dancers around the floor, shoving girls and boys together. She had no time to lose. "Chaconne," the finale of Gluck's "Orpheus," is a huge, gloriously complicated affair, with forty roles for twenty-nine dancers. Staging it and five other ballets in five weeks, on a company that has never danced them before, strikes even the dauntless Farrell as bold. Furthermore, the Washington Ballet won't decide about taking Farrell's productions into repertory until after the season is over, so Farrell doesn't have "anchors"—company rehearsal mistresses—to assist her; she and Victoria Simon, a coach sent by the Balanchine Trust, will have to do all the work themselves.

Happily, Farrell likes nuts-and-bolts work; she claims that it makes for better-integrated performances. But the Washington Ballet is not at her disposal; it has its own fall season to put on, and often the dancers come to her already tired from rehearsing four other ballets. "Naturally, I'd have preferred to rehearse for a year and open in 1996," she says. "But the Kennedy Center wanted me to be part of its twenty-fifth-anniversary celebrations, and this was the only period that was available."

Happily, too, Farrell enjoys taking risks to get what she wants; that was one of her hallmarks as a dancer. As if the shortness of time and help weren't chancy enough, she is entrusting the entire season to a gifted but relatively inexperienced new conductor, Ron Matson, whom she discovered at Cincinnati Ballet. All in all, "Suzanne Farrell Stages Balanchine" is shaping up as a typical Farrell operation. It's the ballet event of the year. ♦

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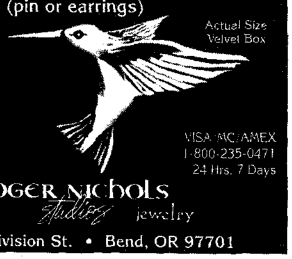

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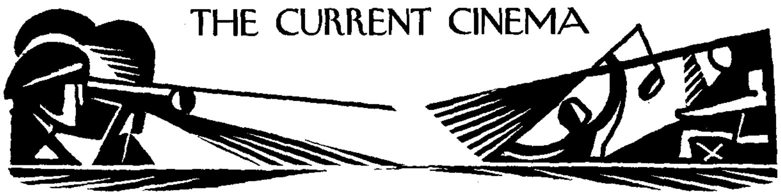


THE CURRENT CINEMA

STARKNESS VISIBLE

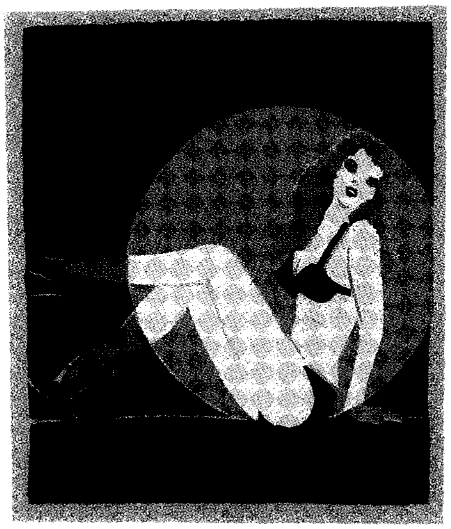
"Showgirls" gets naked, and "Strange Days" fast-forwards to a chaotic future.

BY ANTHONY LANE

Paul Verhoeven's "Showgirls" is something of a novelty. It represents the first occasion on which a major studio—in this case, United Artists—has consciously courted an NC-17 rating instead of battling the threat of one. It launches the screen career of Elizabeth Berkley, in perhaps the most unusual début since that of Ingrid Boulting in "The Last Tycoon." And it has the distinction of being the first movie about Las Vegas that is actually more vulgar than Las Vegas.

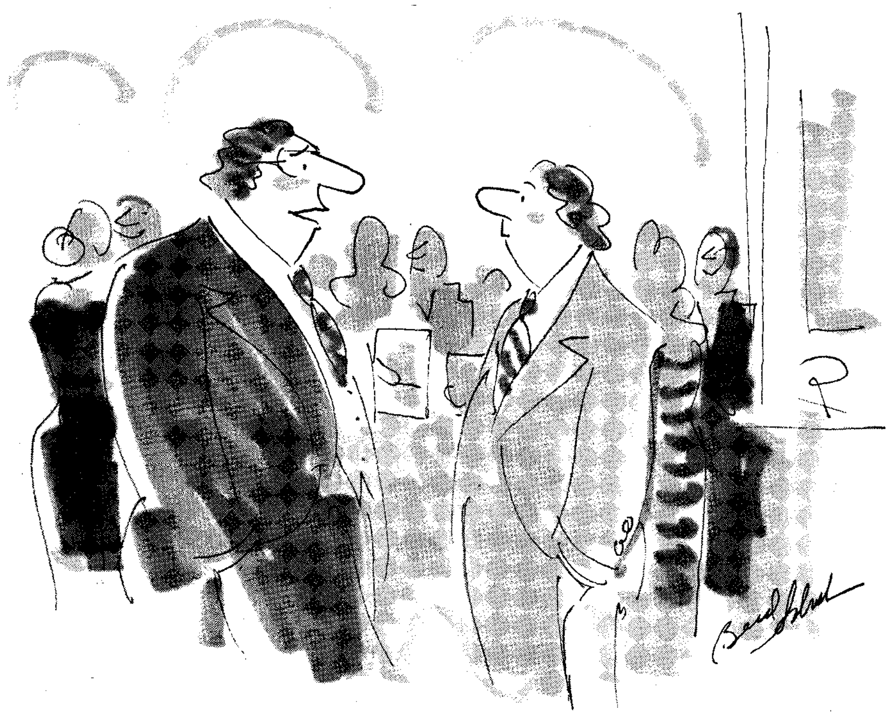
Berkley plays Nomi, a stripper-dancer-whatever who's hitchhiking her way to Las Vegas. Once there, she falls in with nice Molly (Gina Ravera) and gets a job at the Cheetah Club, a crummy joint where her duties involve shimmying in front of salivating jerks. But Nomi has dreams. She wants more, much more. She has her eyes on the Stardust, a plush arena where she can shimmy in front of salivating jerks with money in their wallets—where she can be *herself.* One day, she is spotted by Zack, the "entertainment director" of the Stardust. Zack is played by Kyle MacLachlan, a real actor, who, for the purposes of this movie, graciously sinks to the level of the other performers. Still, I got the feeling that he was trying to hide behind his long, curving forelock in the unactorly hope that he might not be recognized. But that's him all right—buck naked in the swimming pool with Nomi, sipping champagne beneath the quietly tasteful dolphin-shaped fountains.

You may be surprised to learn that what happens next constitutes the only complete sex act in the whole movie. Even so, I'm not sure that it *is* sex: at the crest of her pleasure, Nomi thrashes her head in and out of the water so repeatedly that she may in fact be road-testing a new conditioner. If you believed the hype, "Showgirls" was all set to flay us with honest sex, to embarrass the timidity of mainstream Hollywood by bringing us the full, perspiring reality. In fact, it is neither as brazenly carnal as its creators would like nor remotely as vile as its detractors feared. The movie's big discovery is lap-dancing, an erotic pastime that it presents as something of a revelation but which looked to me as if it had been going on, more or less unchanged, for the last three thousand years. To lap-dance, you undress, sit your client down, order him to stay still and fully clothed, then hover over him, making a motion that you have perfected by watching Mister Softee ice-cream dispensers. Nomi does this to Zack, who has a high old time, but she is berated by one of her friends, the artistically minded James (Glenn Plummer). "You fuck 'em without fucking 'em," as he delicately puts it. If Verhoeven were really bold, he would have used that line on



From the bottom to the topless: Elizabeth Berkley hits the spotlight in "Showgirls."

MARK GAGNON



"I think I'm going to like what I think I'm going to get to know about Powell."

• •

the poster. "Showgirls" is not about sex at all; it is about the business of sex, which is a different matter.

Mind you, what a business! The plot promotes Nomi from the Cheetah to the Stardust, where her Fonteyn-like skills soon threaten the crown of Cristal (Gina Gershon), the star attraction. Here's the twist: Cristal both fears *and* fancies Nomi, inviting her out to lunch and announcing, "I like nice tits. I always have." Nomi strikes back, as sharp as a tack. "I like having them," she says, as if they were friends who occasionally come to visit. But can the art of dance survive their love-hate pact? As the owner of the Stardust says, "The show must go on. The Stardust will never be dark—never has been. Not while I'm alive." These fresh, new-minted phrases spring from the script of Joe Eszterhas, who worked with Verhoeven on "Basic Instinct." By now, it is possible to trace a rough map of their common interests: chicks with weapons, chicks with chicks, and chicks. Between them, Eszterhas and Verhoeven make it abundantly clear that the title of their new movie is not so much a noun as an imperative. They have a story to tell, even a moral to expound, but their deepest wish is to get the girls to show. When Tony (Alan Rachins), who runs the dances at the Stardust, auditions a line of hopefuls, picks three, says "Show me your tits," and hands one of them a helpful cluster of ice cubes, he is acting on behalf of the entire film. (I'm sure that the auditions for "Showgirls" itself were, of course, conducted in a spirit of absolute professionalism and deep respect.)

For the most part, this movie is a blank—a waxwork museum with moving parts. But I did find something rather touching, in the emotional rather than the lap-dancing sense, in Elizabeth Berkley. She can't act, but the sight of her *trying* to act, doing the sorts of things that acting is rumored to consist of, struck me as a far nobler struggle than the boring old I-know-I-can-make-it endeavors of her fictional character. She must have been told at the outset that Nomi is supposed to be a driven woman, because she takes care to invest the most fleeting of actions with a Joan Crawford intensity; the simple act of shaking a ketchup bottle, for instance, is modelled on the jackhammer technique of a road crew. "Showgirls" requires that Berkley spend at least half her time topless, and it could be argued, in the interest not of prurience but of pure dramatic method, that her breasts are more expressive than her face. Looking closely at her mouth, I saw to my surprise that even her lipstick was wearing lipstick, and the sheer weight of Revlon, or whatever, seems to restrict the free play of her feelings from the neck up.

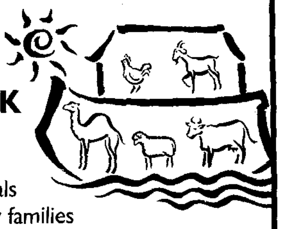
The crucial question is: Should we pay this ridiculous movie the honor of being offended by it? I am not sure that I can be bothered to work up the steam. I would be more troubled by its depiction of women if I thought that any care had been lavished on its depiction of men; you can't accuse a movie of degrading half of humanity when it forgets to grade humanity in the first place. I have cordially loathed all of Verhoeven's earlier pictures, but this was the first one that I didn't object to. "Showgirls" unveils more flesh than "Basic Instinct" did, but it's less explicit in its cynicism: Verhoeven doesn't prod us into ogling, because—and this is bliss—his movie likes to suggest that all these bare-assed boys and girls and all these swirling, nipple-raising, ice-and-fire routines at the Stardust are really rather classy. There is not a whisper of satire in this picture; it ambles along like a two-and-a-quarter-hour special edition of "Models Inc.," which may be why people were laughing so hard in the theatre. The language may be rougher than anything on TV, but after a while the nudity grows as humdrum as a suit. You sit there ready to be shocked, primed for the practically hard-core, and find yourself skidding on soap. Here's the dirty little secret of this movie: it's good clean fun.

I AM not convinced that the granting of an NC-17 rating to "Showgirls" was correct. My advice would have been that the film should not be shown to people *over* seventeen. It is ideally designed to sate and thereby disarm the predilections of teenagers, who might otherwise channel their lusts into anti-social behavior, such as burglary or theatre workshops. Meanwhile, Kathryn Bigelow's "Strange Days" is merely rated R. It is ten times as violent, mucky-mouthed, and inflammatory as "Showgirls," but, by some ineffable leap of logic, the Motion Picture Association of America has determined that a parade of indistinguishable bosoms is more likely to corrupt the nation's youth than a scene in which a woman is grabbed, manacled, violated at knifepoint, and then killed. (There is a rape scene in "Showgirls," but it is mercifully brief.) Plainly, it is the *number* of naked bodies that appalls the M.P.A.A., not the harm that is inflicted on them.

Set in the final days and hours of 1999, "Strange Days" chronicles the efforts made by Lenny Nero (Ralph Fiennes) to keep his head above the millennial murk of Los Angeles. Everyone is sinking, but Lenny is more vulnerable than most. He deals in SQUID disks. A SQUID (it stands for Superconducting Quantum Interference Device, naturally) is a sort of electronic yarmulke that, when it's attached to your head, records your feelings and sensations on disks, which are then sold like drugs. "It's a piece of somebody's life—pure and uncut, straight from the cerebral cortex," says Lenny. This is a brilliant premise—the SQUID is nervously close to the vicarious addiction of cinema itself—and the first half hour or so of "Strange Days" hums with the feverish pleasure of invading other minds and losing your own. Lenny, a former cop, is now in thrall to his own product, and the best scenes in the movie consist simply of Fiennes watching a client try out the SQUID and smiling as the high kicks in, or lying alone in his apartment, soaked in street neon, and tripping on a disk of his memories. A rumpled lost soul in black snakeskin, his ego abased before his SQUID, Fiennes delivers a wonderful demonstration of self-loathing: if he charms other people with chronic sweet talk, that is because he is no longer speaking to his own heart. When Lenny gets bawled out by his friend, a security specialist named Mace (Angela Bassett), he flashes a terrified grin and asks, "We're still buddies, aren't we?" Fiennes is what keeps this film together: he ponders while it rages, the still point in its unwatchable frenzy.

I suspect that it is *meant* to be unwatchable. Bigelow and her screenwriters, James Cameron and Jay Cocks, have fallen for the fallacy that a vision of social and moral breakdown should itself crack up before our eyes. The opening scene sets the tone: a roiling, deafening, formless stampede through an armed robbery, the camera not so much handheld as punch-drunk. Two and a half hours later, the movie is still skewering our eardrums; most of it takes place at night, but Bigelow still manages to blind us with darkness. "Strange Days" is so pleased with its own delirium that minor details such as the plot, or the supporting performances, are left to wander off and do their own thing. Lenny receives two disks that show the rape of a friend and the slaying of a black rap artist; together with the warmhearted Mace and a pal from police days, Max (Tom Sizemore), he decides to solve the crimes. The outcome is obvious, and easy to guess, but the nastiest aspects of the case are (1) that it involves his ex-girlfriend, Faith, and (2) that Faith is played by Juliette Lewis. What ever happened to Lewis? When De Niro eased his finger into her mouth in "Cape Fear," did he somehow infect her with the madness of Max Cady? Lewis is now out of control, a ragbag of dysfunctional mannerisms; the fact that "Strange Days" casts her as a druggy rock singer is something that I prefer to pass over in silence. Somehow, like other terrible actresses, Lewis seems to attract the worst lines: "Oh my God, I can't believe this is happening!" she wails.

But it is happening, sweetheart, and it's heading for a grand showdown on the streets of Los Angeles. As the century ticks away, Bigelow rouses the action into riot; this seems only right and proper, the natural consequence of a delinquent movie. And then, at the last second, she pulls back. The cavalry arrives, the riot disperses, the people hug, happiness descends like confetti—and you think, Where the hell did all *that* come from? Bigelow, baiter of feminists and connoisseur of chaos, doesn't even have the courage of her own apocalypse. "Strange Days" could have been a great picture: it could have taken a lesson from Ralph Fiennes, and lent grace and shape to its paranoid wit. Instead, it looks like a Juliette Lewis riff writ large. ♦



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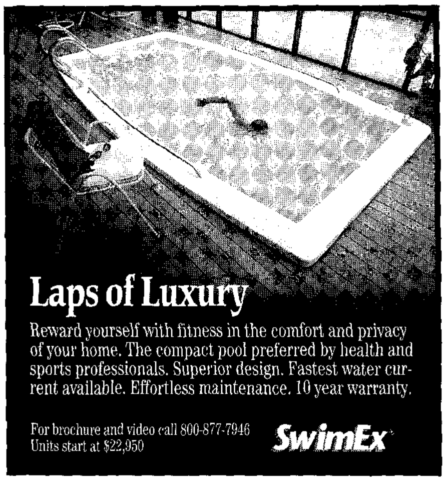

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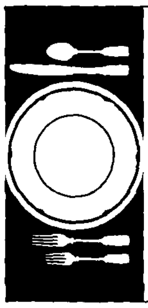

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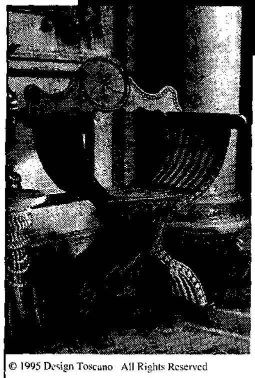

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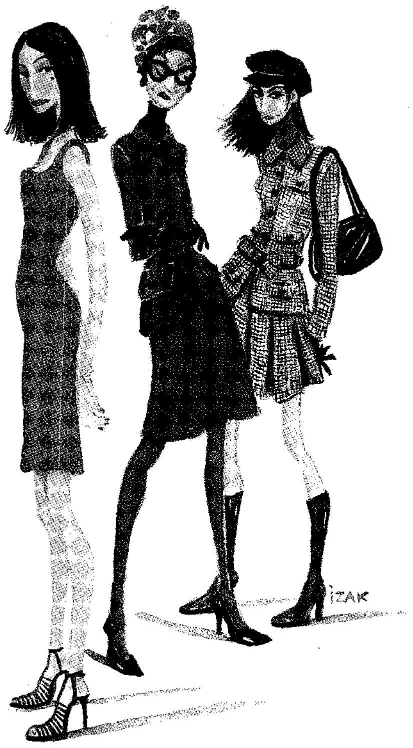
IMAGE WORLD

THE POST-MOD SQUAD

Going swinging sixties, minus the rebellion.

BY HILTON ALS

JUST now, America's fashion-conscious woman is neither fish nor fowl but mod. Resolute in her desire to acquire the "revitalized," mid-sixties, Carnaby Street look of contemporary chic—boxed jackets that constrict the chest, A-line skirts that bind at the hip, vinyl trousers that ride up the crotch, slingbacks that elongate the foot, vinyl boots that cramp the toes, and masses of blond hair meant to obscure her (perforce) windblown vision of the world—the most au-courant woman probably takes a dim view of England's mod past. In fact, one of the paradoxes of the resurgence of mod is that the drugged, androgynous, negative stance affected by the original proponents of London's now thirty-years-past hipdom is at odds with who the fashion-conscious woman is: American and, in equal proportions, guilt- and fat-free. The original proponents of mod were themselves not free of much; as the first generation to come to maturity after the Second World War, they were also the first to defy English class snobbism and embrace the working-class aesthetic popularized through the music of the Beatles, The Who, and Gerry & the Pacemakers. Where mod once turned its cynical shears on the adult world by exaggerating the clean line of adult business attire, narrowing pater's suits and ties, and shortening his secretary's dress, women who buy fashion today bring a new financial responsibility to mod—at least, to the extent that they can afford to buy the clothes that constitute the trend. Joan Kaner, the fashion director for Neiman Marcus, has observed, "Most of the customers who shop in the designer world are thirty to thirty-five years old and upward. There are just not that many young designer customers around."



What we've seen before will be repeated to greater financial—not artistic—success.

The same thirty-year-old woman who hastily appropriated "grunge" and urban street fashion some years back will now breezily ignore the working-class roots of the mod aesthetic, because it encroaches on her distinctly American belief that fashion, like most things, is egalitarian—an illusory concept. She may, however, flirt with aspects of mod's gritty affect—pale skin, greasy hair, a sullen demeanor—and she will undoubtedly feel dwarfed even as she looks up to mod's irresistible female icons, Vanessa Redgrave and Julie Christie, who imbued their traditional English theatrical training with the nervous rhythm of Yé-Yé! rock and roll and a formidable feminism. If a woman wants to explore her insecurities further, she can pick up the September

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issue of *Harper's Bazaar*, where a fashion feature titled "Isn't It Darling" seems meant to evoke Christie's mod style (white, bee-stung lips; nearly white hair) but not what she achieved on the screen: a perverse libertinism, and the ability to project the contours of liberation through her dress, her grooming, and her personality. Every inch of her countenance was at odds with the more puritanical American style adopted by other women of her period. (The film director Robert Altman satirizes this particular culture war in his 1975 masterwork, "Nashville." In it, Christie, as "Herself," is introduced to the bouffant-sporting, God-fearing, country-and-Western singing star Connie White, played by Karen Black. Black-as-White refuses to believe that the curly-headed Christie, in her casual attire, is an Oscar-winning actress. "She can't even comb her hair!" she exclaims in her white-trash twang.)

The introductory copy in *Harper's Bazaar* reads, in part, "Picture Julie Christie, London's It Girl, 1965. Her neat belted tweed suit, the proper cocktail dress—almost everything we want now." That "neat" averts our glance from mod's original depressed, working-class aura and focusses our attention on the designer who is indirectly responsible for cleaning mod up: Miuccia Prada. Her classical design sense is based on the school uniforms of her youth, and her clothes have a dignified functionality that turns mod into something crisp and socially acceptable.

In fact, given Prada's pervasive influence, designers who wish to revivify mod certainly do not have to take a trip to the back-issue stand in search of inspiration, as Marc Jacobs, Anna Sui, and Betsey Johnson have done in plundering Diana Vreeland-edited sixties *Vogue* as a source for their faddish, generally uninspired designs. The Prada and less expensive Miu Miu lines have been so influential in establishing "simple" shapes that rehashed mod seems almost a smoke screen devised by the xenophobic American fashion industry to disguise how powerful and singular a design force Prada really is.

Prada has become a success by avoiding fashion's well-trodden runway. Though designers are constantly paging through history's sourcebook in the service of their "contemporary" agenda, they too often sideswipe the way we actually live now—what a working woman really requires to survive the mild anxiety fuelled by gossip that is office life. And many of them don't seem to grasp why contemporary women become fashion-conscious in the first place—to escape the history of socially oppressed Mom marching in demonstrations so that her daughter would feel liberated to choose her own life and her own clothes.

Indeed, part of the pleasure of mod is its expression of raw, in-your-face teen-age rebellion—the knee-length leather coat and slingback sandals worn by Charlotte Rampling in "Georgy Girl," a gloriously self-centered skinny "bird" who flew on the wings of mod fecklessness.

It's not news to anyone that a woman has to have a teen-age girl's body in order to be fashionable—flat chest, slight hips, no ass—and the mod aesthetic requires nothing less. This is never directly stated by fashion's arbiters, but it's apparent in the industry's choice of representatives. That Kristen McMenamy, with her pallor and her nervous countenance, was, a few seasons ago, the model often used to showcase grunge says a great deal about the fashion industry's need for that teen-age girl. And McMenamy herself has been too successful by half at projecting teen drama. After a Versace couture show in Paris a few years ago, I saw her kick a fashion editor because he had ignored her complaints about the clothes she had to wear in the show, about how much more beautiful the other models in the show were, and about how exhausted she was and no one seemed to care. "I'm about to suffer supermodel *collapse*," she whined.

"The teen-age girl has dilemmas—what to wear, whom to go out with, why she's upset—and she wants immediate solutions to those things," Caroline Wells, the marketing director of *'Teen*, told me. *'Teen* is a bright, eternally optimistic four-color magazine, with a readership of more than five million, geared to girls between the ages of twelve and nineteen. In Wells's mind, these girls differ little from the "older girls" who are drawn to *Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and *Elle*—and to mod. Like those magazines, *'Teen* highlights new trends, the difference being that it offers guidelines on how to make those trends work in the larger world.

"Fashionable bodies are teen-age bodies," Wells says. "But we also deal with the teen-age girl's fearfulness and insecurity. On the other hand, she has more leverage than her mom ever did. She has credit cards."

The potential metamorphosis of teen-age girls into fashion-conscious women helps explain the Calvin Klein phenomenon: in his ultimately melancholy ad campaigns—with Brooke, with Kate—Klein records this transition with the ardor of a Humbert Humbert sadly watching his Lolita grow up. The notorious cK ad campaign did not exploit its young female models; what shocked was their relaxed, self-aware stance. The Klein controversy was so quickly absorbed by the media and, in one instance, parodied—in a current MTV spot, the cartoon antiheroes Beavis and Butt-head stand in for the Klein ads' lascivious off-screen interlocutor—that it has already grown stale. Klein has replaced the ads with the photographer Steven Meisel's heavily Richard Avedon/Corinne Day-influenced images of Klein's Prada-influenced modish clothing, perhaps in an attempt to duplicate a cultural success that still resonates: the selling of mod youth thirty years ago. Like Murray the K picking up the lads from Liverpool and Twiggy becoming a corporation unto herself, mod was a hit with a bullet, destined to go platinum. If fashion teaches us anything, it's that what we've seen before will be repeated to greater financial—not artistic—success. The frisson attached to Klein's controversial cK ads was not in his depiction of the vacant stares and negative affect that constitute chic among America's young. It was in the ads' subtext: since Klein no longer aspires to the status quo, having by now in part defined it, he can afford to trash *goyische* culture. Its offspring buy his clothes. ♦

CLEAR DAYS INSIDE THE TUBE

[*Listing in the Washington Post*]

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SHOUTS & MURMURS

INDIGNATIONS

BY ANTHONY LANE

The White House has apologized to people of Welsh heritage for President Clinton's use of the expression "welsh on your debts" on Friday.

A White House spokeswoman, Ginny Terzano, said: "There was never any intention to use this as an ethnic slur, and we apologize to anyone who may be offended. The President simply used this word to point out that we must not fail deliberately to meet our obligations or debts."

—*The Times, September 24, 1995.*

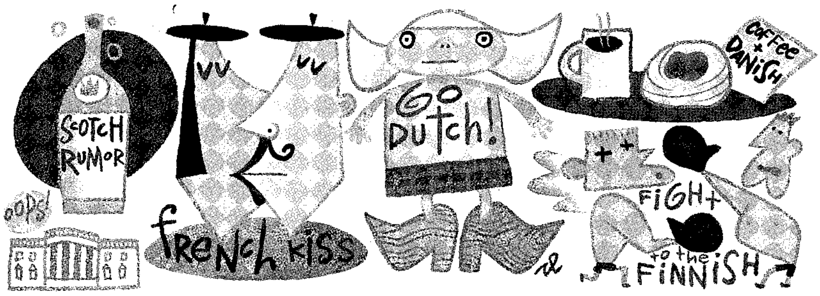
OCTOBER 17TH: Phil Gramm's Presidential campaign ran into trouble yesterday when the Texas Senator asked for "a coffee and Danish to go." Mr. Gramm made the request while visiting the Snax Not Tax Coffee Shop, in Salt Lake City, and his words were recorded by an accompanying camera crew. The Danish Ambassador's office in Washington swiftly issued a statement decrying the Senator's offhand reference to Denmark. The statement concluded, "The placement of the phrase 'to go' immediately after the word 'Danish' gives the impression that a Gramm Administration would advocate the compulsory repatriation of those thousands of Danish-Americans who have provided such valuable services to the United States in so many areas, especially the bacon and ham industries." Questioned by reporters, Senator Gramm appeared mystified by the injury he had caused, saying that it was "all Greek" to him.

NOVEMBER 5TH: General Colin Powell today shocked the nation by withdrawing from the race for the Republican nomination for the Presidency only two days after announcing that he would run. Earlier this week, he formally declared his candidacy in a speech that began with the words "It is time to scotch the rumors." Since then, the fledgling Powell campaign has been denounced by Americans of Scottish descent, and by parliamentary representatives in Scotland itself. General Powell's efforts to repair the situation, in which he explained that "to scotch" meant "to lay to rest," appeared only to exacerbate it. Joining the chorus of disapproval was the American Whiskey Distillers Association, whose spokesman, James Maltish, deplored the General's choice of words. "Scotch is not a rumor," he said. "It is a fact of life, and a smooth and peaty one at that. Enjoy it with friends."

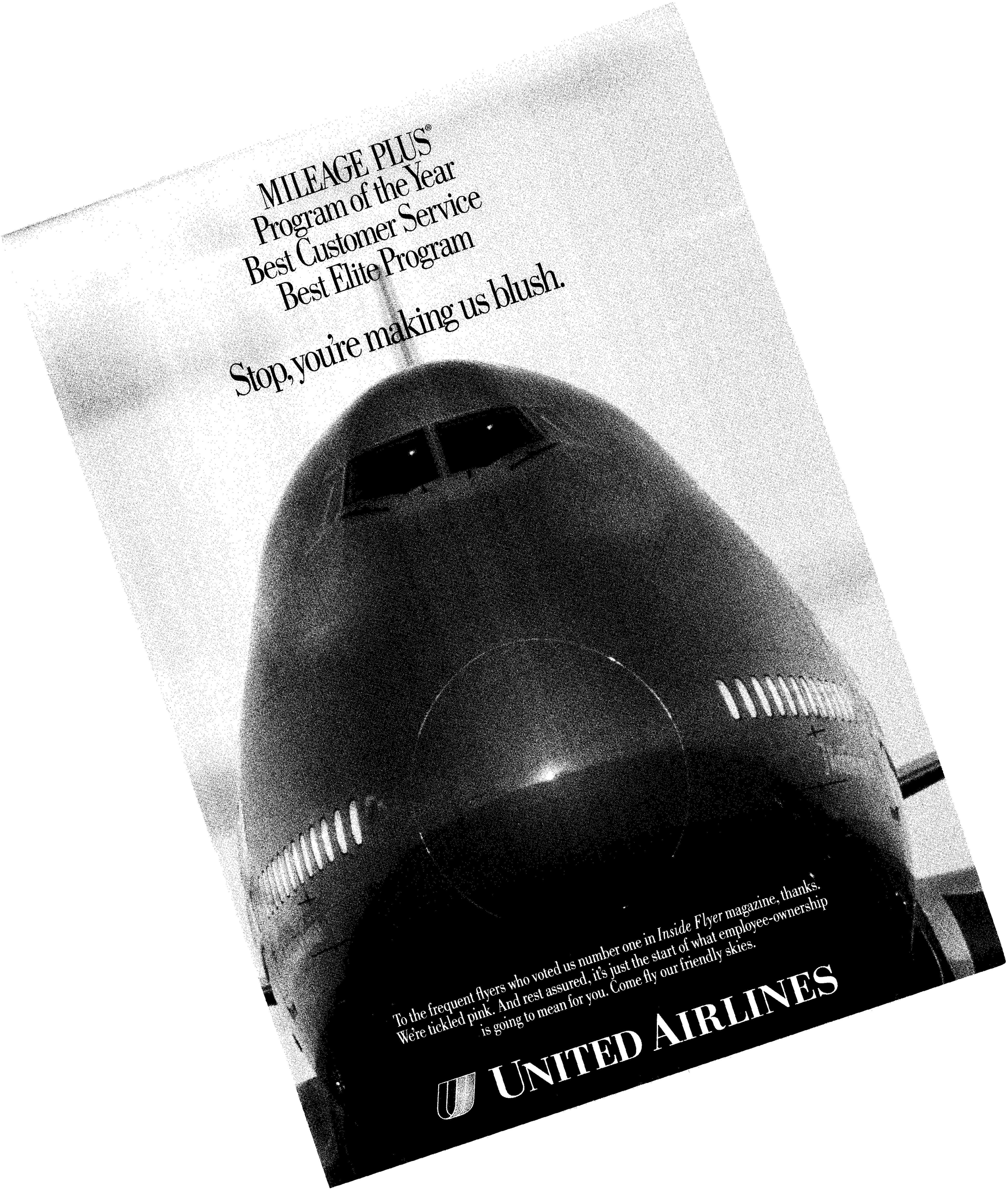
DECEMBER 20TH: Bob Dole's hopes of securing the Republican ticket suffered a major setback yesterday when the Washington *Post* published details of what it alleges is an undisclosed romance in the Senator's past. According to the *Post*, the young Mr. Dole was seen embracing an unnamed woman at a veterans' dinner dance in 1956. The Senator moved quickly to play down the incident. "It was hardly a French kiss, more a peck on the cheek," he said. "The lady in question was married at the time." Mr. Dole's recollections, applauded at home for their honesty, have angered French government officials abroad. "By employing this outdated term, the Senator continues to propagate the myth that the French have an unhealthy obsession with sex," said Élysée spokeswoman Sophie de Bonnebouche.

JANUARY 1ST: President Clinton, whose hopes of reëlection have been bolstered by the misadventures of his Republican challengers, today predicted that the Presidential contest would nevertheless be "a fight to the finish." A written transcript of the President's speech, distributed to White House correspondents within the hour, clarified the spelling of the phrase but arrived too late to limit the widespread diplomatic damage that had already been done. Initial reports from Helsinki indicate that Finnish armed forces have been stepped up to full "Orange Blizzard" combat alert in expectation of an imminent attack by the United States. Plans for a counter-invasion are also under way. "These guys will hit America where it hurts," a source explained.

In Washington, the President, who only last week outraged the Dutch community by recalling that as students he and Mrs. Clinton used to "go Dutch," now found himself obliged to mollify American Finns. "In the heat of the moment, I rashly insulted a great nation," he said, before going on to turn the blooper to his advantage. "If you never say the wrong thing, how can you hope to do the right thing? I have pledged to bring the wisdom of experience to my second term. But just remember, every elder statesman started off as a Young Turk." ♦



ROBERT NEUBECKER



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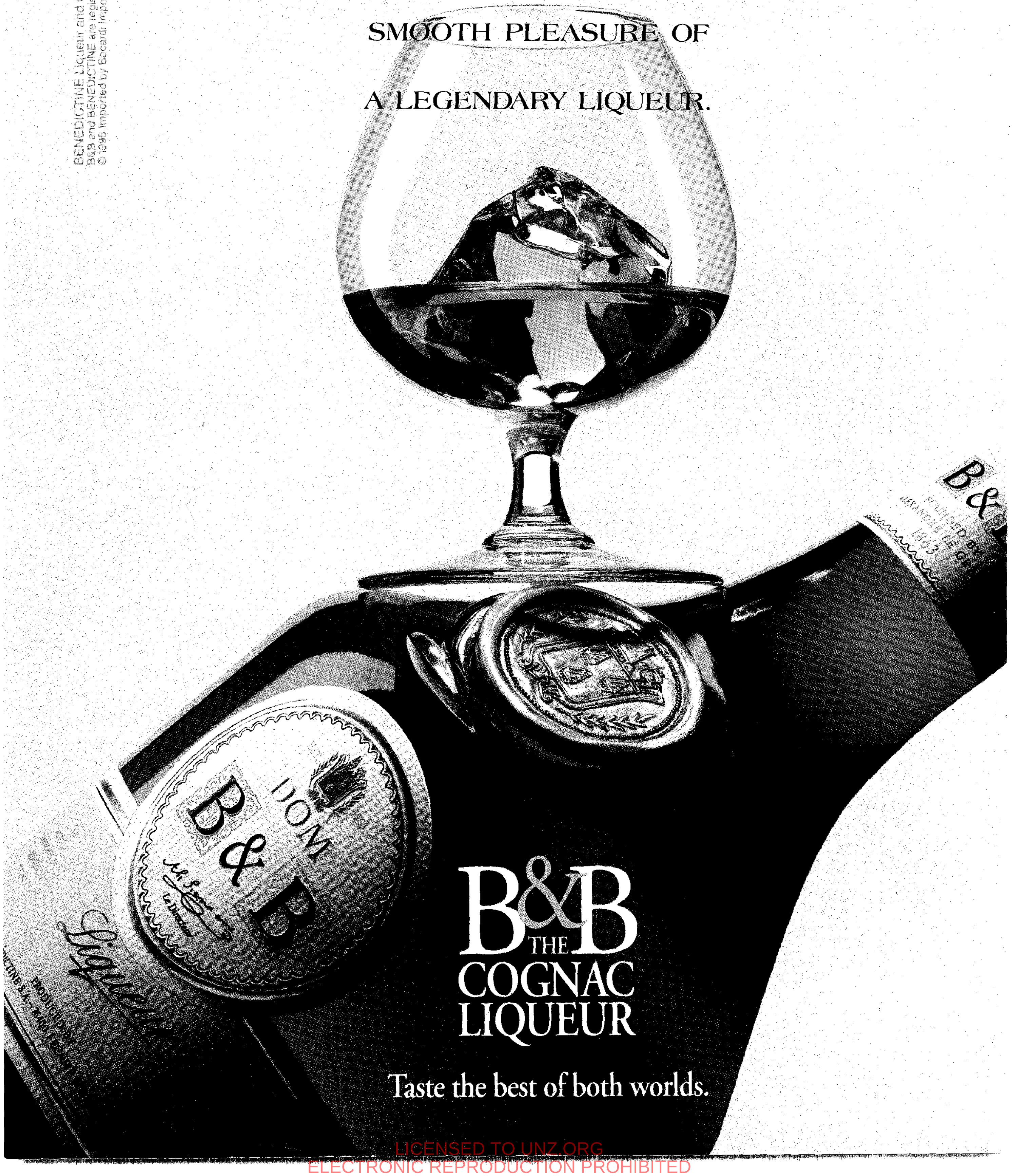

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